Engraved by Anker Smith from a Picture in Gloucester Palace.

WILLIAM WARBURTON,

BISHOP OF GLOUCESTER.

ANNOTATIONS

BY

SAM. JOHNSON & GEO. STEEVENS,

AND

THE VARIOUS COMMENTATORS,

UPON

HAMLET,

WRITTEN BY

WILL. SHAKSPERE.

——SIC ITUR AD ASTRA.

VIRG.

LONDON:

Printed for, and under the Direction of,

JOHN BELL, British-Library, STRAND,

Bookseller to His Royal Highness the PRINCE of WALES.

M DCC LXXXVII.

ANNOTATIONS

UPON

HAMLET.

ACT I.

Line 2. ——*Me*:——] i. e. *me* who am already on the watch, and have a right to demand the watch-word. STEEVENS.

14. *The* rivals *of my watch*,——] By *rivals of the watch*, are meant those who were to watch on the next adjoining ground. *Rivals*, in the original sense of the word, were proprietors of neighbouring lands, parted only by a brook, which belonged equally to both. HANMER.

So in *The Tragedy of Hoffman*, 1637:

" And make thee *rival* in those governments."

Again, in *Antony and Cleopatra*, act iii. sc. 5.—"having made use of him in the wars against Pompey, presently denied him *rivalry*." STEEVENS.

I should propose to point and alter this passage thus:—

If you do meet Horatio, and Marcellus
The *rival* of my watch—

Horatio is represented throughout the play as a gentleman of no profession. Marcellus was an officer, and consequently did that through duty, for which Horatio had no motive but curiosity. Besides, there is but one person on each watch. Bernardo comes to relieve Francisco, and Marcellus to supply the place of some other on the adjoining station. The reason why Bernardo, as well as the rest, expect Horatio, was because he knew him to be informed of what had happened the night before. WARNER.

Horatio, as it appears, watches out of curiosity. But in act ii. sc. 1. to Hamlet's question, *Hold you the watch to-night?* Horatio, Marcellus, and Bernardo, all answer, *We do, my honour'd lord.* The folio indeed reads *both*, which one may with greater propriety refer to Marcellus and Bernardo. If we did not find the latter gentleman in such good company, we might have taken him to have been, like Francisco whom he relieves, an honest but common soldier. The strange indiscriminate use of Italian and Roman names in this and other plays, makes it obvious that the author was very little conversant in even the rudiments of either language. REMARKS.

28. *What*, &c.] The quarto gives this speech to Horatio.

34. —*the minutes of this night*;] This seems to have been an expression common in Shakspere's time. I find it in one of Ford's plays, *The Fancies*, act v.

"I promise ere *the minutes of the night*."

STEEVENS.

36. —approve *our eyes*——] Add a new testimony to that of our eyes. JOHNSON.

So in Heywood's *Iron Age*, 1632:

"I can by grounded arguments *approve*

"Your power and potency." STEEVENS.

51. *Thou art a scholar, speak to it, Horatio.*] Thus Toby, in the *Night-Walker*, by Beaumont and Fletcher, says:

"——It grows still longer,

"'Tis steeple-high now; and it sails away Nurse,

"Let's call the butler up, for *he speaks Latin*,

"*And that will daunt the devil*."

In like manner the honest butler in Mr. Addison's *Drummer*, recommends the steward to speak *Latin* to the ghost. REED.

53. ——*it* harrows *me*, &c.] To *harrow* is to conquer, to subdue. The word is of Saxon origin. So in the old bl. let. romance of *Syr Eglamour of Artoys*:

"He swore by him that *harowed* hell."

STEEVENS.

74. —*an angry* parle,] This is one of the affected words

words introduced by Lilly. So in *Two Wise Men and all the Rest Fools*, 1619:

"—that you told me at our last *parlè*."

STEEVENS.

75. *He smote the sledded* Polack *on the ice.*] *Pole-ax* in the common editions. He speaks of a prince of Poland whom he slew in battle. He uses the word *Polack* again, act ii. sc. 4. POPE.

Polack was, in that age, the term for an inhabitant of Poland. *Polaque*, French. JOHNSON.

So in *Vittoria Corombona*, &c. 1612:

"I scorn him
"Like a shav'd *Pollack*."

Sledded, from *sled*, or *sledge*, a carriage without wheels, made use of in the cold countries. STEEVENS.

77. —*and* just *at this dead hour*,] The old quarto reads *jumpe*: but the following editions discarded it for a more fashionable word. WARBURTON.

The old reading is, *jump at this* same *hour*; *same* is a kind of correlative to *jump*; *just* is in the oldest folio. The correction was probably made by the author.

JOHNSON.

Jump and *just* were synonymous in the time of Shakspere. Ben Jonson speaks of verses made on *jump names*, *i. e.* names that suit exactly. Nash says —"and *jumpe*, imitating a verse in *As in præsenti*." Again, in M. Kyffin's translation of the *Andria* of *Terence*, 1588:

"Comes he this day so *jump* in the very time of this marriage?"

STEEVENS.

79. *In what particular thought to work.*——] *i. e.* What particular train of thinking to follow.

STEEVENS.

80. —*Gross and scope*——] General thoughts, and tendency at large. JOHNSON.

85. —*daily* cast—] The quartos read *cost.*

STEEVENS.

87. *Why such impress of ship-wrights,*——] Judge Barrington, in his *Observations on the more ancient Statutes,* p. 300, having observed that Shakspere gives English manners to every country where his scene lies, infers from this passage, that in the time of queen Elizabeth, shipwrights as well as seamen were forced to serve.

WHALLEY.

99. —*who by a seal'd compact,*

Well ratify'd by law and heraldry,] Mr. Upton says, that Shakspere sometimes expresses one thing by two substantives, and that *law and heraldry* means, by the *herald law.* So in *Antony and Cleopatra,* act iv.

" Where rather I expect victorious life,
" Than *death and honour,*" *i. e.* honourable death.

STEEVENS.

Puttenham, in his *Art of Poesie,* speaks of the *Figure of Twynnes,* " *horses and barbes,* for *barbed horses, venim & Dartes* for *venimous Dartes,*" &c. FARMER.

106. —*as, by* that cov'nant,

And carriage of the articles design'd,] The old quarto reads,

—*as by the same* comart;

and this is right. *Comart* signifies a bargain, and *carrying*

rying of the articles, the *covenants* entered into to confirm that bargain. Hence we see the common reading makes a tautology. WARBURTON

I can find no such word as *comart* in any dictionary. STEEVENS.

107. *And* carriage *of the articles* design'd,] *Carriage* is *import*; *design'd* is *formed*, *drawn up between them*. JOHNSON.

109. *Of* unimproved—] *Unimproved* for *unrefined*. WARBURTON.

Full of unimproved mettle, is full of spirit not regulated or guided by knowledge or experience. JOHNSON.

111. *Shark'd* up a list, &c.] I believe to *shark up* means to pick up without distinction, as the *shark*-fish collects his prey. The quartos read *lawless* instead of *landless*. STEEVENS.

It appears from what follows, verse 116, that *landless* is the proper word. HENLEY.

113. *That hath a* stomach *in't*;——] *Stomach*, in the time of our author, was used for *constancy*, *resolution*. JOHNSON.

120. —*romage*——] Tumultuous hurry. JOHNSON.

121. [*I think*, &c.] These, and all other lines confined within crotchets throughout this play, are omitted in the folio edition of 1623. The omissions leave the play sometimes better and sometimes worse, and seem made only for the sake of abbreviation. JOHNSON.

It

It may be worth while to observe, that the title-pages of the first quartos in 1604 and 1605, declare this play to be *enlarged to almost as much againe as it was, according to the true and perfect copy*. STEEVENS.

122. *Well may it sort,*—] The cause and the effect are proportionate and suitable. JOHNSON.

125. *A* mote *it is,*—] The first quarto reads, a *moth*. STEEVENS.

126. —palmy *state of Rome,*] *Palmy* for *victorious*; in the other editions, *flourishing*. POPE.

130. *Stars shone with trains of fire; dews of blood fell,* &c.] Thus Mr. Rowe altered these lines, which have no immediate connection with the preceding ones. The quartos read (for the passage is not in the folio):

As stars with trains of fire, and dews of blood,
Disasters *in* the sun,—

Perhaps an intermediate line is lost. STEEVENS.

131. Disasters *veil'd the sun*;—] *Disasters* is here finely used in its original signification of evil conjunction of stars. WARBURTON.

Stars shone *with trains of fire*; *dews of blood* fell;
Disasters veil'd *the sun*;] The words *shone, fell,* and *veil'd,* having been introduced by Mr. Rowe without authority, may be safely rejected. Might we not come nearer the original copy by reading,

Astres, with trains of fire and dews of blood,
Disastrous, dimm'd the sun.

There is, I acknowledge, no authority for the word *astres*; but our author has coined many words, and in

this very speech there are two, *gibber* and *precurse*, that are used, I believe, by no other writer. He seems to have laboured here to make his language correspond with the preternatural appearances that he describes. *Astres* [from *astrum*] is of exactly the same formation as *antres*, which he has introduced in *Othello*, and which is not, I believe, found elsewhere. The word now proposed being uncommon, it is not surprising that the transcriber's ear should have deceived him, and that he should have written, instead of it, two words *(As stars)* of nearly the same sound. The word *star*, which occurs in the next line, is thus rendered not so offensive to the ear, as it is as the text now stands. If, however, this be thought too licentious, we might read, with less departure from the old copy than Mr. Rowe's text,

His stars, with trains of fire, and dews of blood,
Disastrous, *dimm'd* the sun;———

i. e. the stars that presided over Cæsar's fortunes. So in our author's 26th Sonnet:

" 'Till whatsoever *star*, that guides my moving,
" Points on me graciously with fair aspect."

Each of the words proposed, and printed above in Italicks, might have been easily confounded by the ear with those that have been substituted in their room. The latter, *dimm'd*, is fully supported not only by Plutarch's account in the life of Cæsar ["also the brightness of the *sunne* was *darkened*, the which, all that yeare through, rose very *pale*, and *shined not out*"],

out"], but by various passages in our author's works. So in *The Tempest*:

" ————I have be-*dimm'd*
" The noon-tide *sun*."

Again, in *King Richard III.*

" As doth the blushing discontented *sun*,—
" When he perceives the envious clouds are bent
" To *dim* his glory."

Again, in our author's 18th Sonnet:

" Sometimes too hot *the eye of heaven* shines,
" And often is his gold complexion *dimm'd*."

In the first act of this play, the quarto, 1611, reads —" 'Tis not my inky cloke *could smother*"—[for *good mother*]. If, as in the present instance, there had been but one copy, how could this strange error have been rectified but by the boldness of conjecture?

MALONE.

134. *And even*——] Not only such prodigies have been seen in Rome, but the elements have shewn our countrymen like forerunners and foretokens of violent events. JOHNSON.

—*precurse of* fierce *events*,—] *Fierce*, for *terrible*. WARBURTON.

I rather believe that *fierce* signifies *conspicuous*, *glaring*. It is used in a somewhat similar sense in *Timon*

—O the *fierce* wretchedness that glory brings!

STEEVENS.

136. *And prologue to the* omen *coming on*,] But *prologue* and *omen* are merely synonymous here. The poet means, that these strange *phœnomena* are prologues

and forerunners of the events *presag'd:* and such sense the slight alteration which I have ventured to make, by changing *omen* to *omen'd*, very aptly gives.

THEOBALD.

Omen, for *fate*. WARBURTON.

Hanmer follows Theobald.

A distich from the life of Merlin, by Heywood, will shew that there is no occasion for correction:

"Merlin well vers'd in many an hidden spell,
"His countries *omen* did long since foretell."

FARMER.

Again, in *The Vow-Breaker*:

"And much I fear the weakness of her braine
"Should draw her to some *ominous* exigent."

STEEVENS.

141. If *thou hast any* sound,—] The speech of Horatio to the spectre is very elegant and noble, and congruous to the common traditions of the causes of apparitions. JOHNSON.

168. *Whether in sea*, &c.] According to the pneumatology of that time, every element was inhabited by its peculiar order of spirits, who had dispositions different, according to their various places of abode. The meaning therefore is, that all *spirits extravagant*, wandering out of their element, whether aërial spirits visiting earth, or earthly spirits ranging the air, return to their station, to their proper limits in which they are *confined*. JOHNSON.

Bourne of Newcastle, in his *Antiquities of the common People*, informs us, "It is a received tradition among

among the vulgar, that at the time of cock-crowing, the midnight spirits forsake these lower regions, and go to their proper places.—Hence it is, says he, that in country places, where the way of life requires more early labour, they always go cheerfully to work at that time; whereas if they are called abroad sooner, they imagine every thing they see a wandering ghost." And he quotes on this occasion, as all his predecessors had done, the well-known lines from the first hymn of *Prudentius*. I know not whose translation he gives us, but there is an old one by Heywood. The *pious Chansons*, the *hymns* and *carrols*, which Shakspere mentions presently, were usually copied from the elder Christian poets. FARMER.

169. *Th' extravagant—*] *i. e.* got out of its bounds. WARBURTON,

So in *Nobody and Somebody*, 1598: "—they took me up for a '*stravagant*." STEEVENS.

172. *It faded on the crowing of the cock.*] This is a very ancient superstition. Philostratus giving an account of the apparition of Achilles' shade to Apollonius Tyaneus, says, that it vanished with a little glimmer as soon as the *cock crowed*. Vit. Apol. iv. 16. STEEVENS.

176. ——*dares stir abroad.*] Quarto. The folio reads—*can walk*—. STEEVENS.

178. *No fairy* takes.——] No fairy *strikes* with lameness or diseases. This sense of *take* is frequent in this author. JOHNSON.

182. —*high* eastern *hill*:] The old quarto has it better *eastward*. WARBURTON.

201. *With* one *auspicious and* one *dropping eye*;] Thus the folio. The quarto, with somewhat less of quaintness,

With *an* auspicious, and *a* dropping eye.

The same thought, however, occurs in *The Winter's Tale*: "She had *one eye* declined for the loss of her husband; *another* elevated that the oracle was fulfilled." STEEVENS.

I once thought that *dropping*, in this line, meant only *depressed*, or cast downwards; an idea probably suggested by the passage in *The Winter's Tale*, quoted by Mr. Steevens. But it means, I believe, *weeping*. "*Dropping* of the eyes" was a technical expression in our author's time.—"If the spring be wet with much south wind—the next summer will happen agues, blearness, *dropping of the eyes*, and pains of the bowels." Hopton's *Concordancie of yeares*, 8vo. 1616. MALONE.

211. Colleagued *with this dream of his advantage*,] The meaning is, He goes to war so indiscreetly and unprepared, that he has no allies to support him but a *dream*, with which he is *colleagued* or confederated. WARBURTON.

221. ——*to suppress*

His further gait *herein*;——] *Gate* or *gait* is here used in the northern sense, for *proceeding*, *passage*; from the A. S. verb *gae*. A *gate* for a path, passage, or street, is still current in the north. PERCY.

227. —*more than the scope*] More than is comprised in the general design of these articles, which you may explain in a more diffuse and dilated style.

JOHNSON.

228. —*these* dilated *articles*——] *i. e.* the articles when dilated. MUSGRAVE.

237. *The head is not more native to the heart,*
The hand more instrumental to the mouth,
Than is the throne of Denmark to thy father.]

The sense seems to be this, the head is not formed to be more useful to the heart, the hand is not more at the service of the mouth, than my power is at your father's service. That is, he may command me to the utmost; he may do what he pleases with my kingly authority. STEEVENS.

256. Ham. *A little more than* kin, *and less than* kind.] *Kind* is the Teutonick word for *child*. Hamlet therefore answers with propriety to the titles of *cousin* and *son*, which the king had given him, that he was somewhat more than *cousin*, and less than *son*.

JOHNSON.

In this line, with which Shakspere introduces Hamlet, Dr. Johnson has perhaps pointed out a nicer distinction than it can justly boast of. To establish the sense contended for, it should have been proved that *kind* was ever used by any English writer for *child*. *A little more than kin*, is a little more than common relation. The king was certainly something *less than kind*, by having betrayed the mother of Hamlet into an indecent and incestuous marriage, and obtained the

crown

crown by means which he suspects to be unjustifiable. In the fifth act, the prince accuses his uncle of having *popt in between the election and his hopes*, which obviates Dr. Warburton's objection to the old reading, viz. that "the king had given no occasion for such a reflection."

A jingle of the same sort is found in *Mother Bombie*, 1594, and seems to have been proverbial, as I have met with it more than once: "——the nearer we are in blood, the further we must be from love; the greater the *kindred* is, the less the *kindness* must be." Again, in *Gorboduc*, a tragedy, 1565:

"In *kinde* a father, but not *kindelyness*."

As *kind*, however, signifies *nature*, Hamlet may mean that his relationship was become an *unnatural* one, as it was partly founded upon incest. Our author's *Julius Cæsar*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *King Richard II.* and *Titus Andronicus*, exhibit instances of *kind* being used for *nature*; and so too in this play of *Hamlet*, act ii. scene the last:

"Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, *kindless* villain."

Dr. Farmer, however, observes, that *kin* is still used for *cousin* in the midland counties. STEEVENS.

Hamlet does not, I think, mean to say, that *his uncle* is a little more than kin, &c. The king had called the prince—"My cousin Hamlet, and my son." His reply therefore is—"I am a little more than thy kinsman [for I am thy step-son;] and somewhat less than kind to thee [for I hate thee, as being the per-

son

son who has entered into an incestuous marriage with my mother.]" Or, if we understand *kind* in its ancient sense, then the meaning will be—*I am more than thy kinsman, for I am step-son*; being such, *I am less near to thee than thy natural offspring*, and therefore not entitled to the appellation of *son*, which you have now given me. MALONE.

258. —*too much i' the sun.*] He perhaps alludes to the proverb, *Out of heaven's blessing into the warm sun.* JOHNSON.

——*too much i' the sun.*] Meaning probably his being sent for from his studies to be exposed at his uncle's marriage as his *chiefest courtier*, &c. STEEVENS.

I question whether a quibble between *sun* and *son* be not here intended. FARMER.

261. —*vailed lids,*] With lowering eyes, cast down eyes. JOHNSON.

274. —shews *of grief,*] Thus the folio. The first quarto reads—*chapes*—I suppose for *shapes*. STEEVENS.

281. —*your father lost a father*;

That father lost, lost his;——] The meaning of the passage is no more than this: *Your father lost a father*, *i. e.* your grandfather, which *lost grandfather*, also lost his father. STEEVENS.

284. —obsequious *sorrow*:—] *Obsequious* is here from *obsequies* or *funeral ceremonies*. JOHNSON.

So in *Titus Andronicus*:

"To

"To shed *obsequious* tears upon his trunk."

STEEVENS.

285. *In obstinate* condolement,——] *Condolement*, for *sorrow*. WARBURTON.

287. —*a will most* incorrect—] *Incorrect*, for *untutor'd*. WARBURTON.

295. *To* reason *most absurd*,——] *Reason* is here used in its common sense, for the *faculty* by which we form conclusions from arguments. JOHNSON.

302. *And, with no less* nobility *of love*] *Nobility*, for *magnitude*. WARBURTON.

Nobility is rather *generosity*. JOHNSON.

304. *Do I* impart *toward you?*—] *Impart* for *profess*. WARBURTON.

I believe *impart* is, *impart myself*, *communicate* whatever I can bestow. JOHNSON.

Do I impart toward you?——] The crown of Denmark was elective. So in *Sir Clyomon, Knight of the Golden Shield*, &c. 1599:

"And me possess for spoused wife, who in *election* am

"To have the *crown of Denmark* here, as heir unto the same."

The king means, that as Hamlet stands the fairest chance to be next elected, he will strive with as much love to ensure the crown to him, as a father would shew in the continuance of heirdom to a son.

STEEVENS.

I agree with Mr. Steevens, that the crown of Denmark (as in most of the Gothick kingdoms) was elective,

tive, and not hereditary; though it might be customary, in elections, to pay some attention to the royal blood, which by degrees produced hereditary succession. Why then do the rest of the commentators so often treat Claudius as an *usurper*, who had deprived young Hamlet of his *right* by *heirship* to his father's crown? Hamlet calls him drunkard, murderer, and villain; one who had carried the election by low and mean practices; had

"Popt in between the election and my hopes—"

had

"From a shelf the precious diadem stole,
"And put it in his pocket:"

but never hints at his being an *usurper*. His discontent arose from his uncle's being preferred before him, not from any legal right which he pretended to set up to the crown. Some regard was probably had to the recommendation of the preceding prince, in electing the successor. And therefore young Hamlet had "the voice of the king himself for his succession in Denmark;" and he at his own death prophesies, that "the election would light on Fortinbras, who had his dying voice," conceiving that by the death of his uncle, he himself had been king for an instant, and had therefore a right to recommend. When in the fourth act the rabble wished to choose Laertes king, I understood that antiquity was forgot, and custom violated, by electing a new king in the life-time of the old one, and perhaps also by the calling in a stranger to the royal blood. BLACKSTONE.

307.

307. —*bend you to remain*] *i. e.* subdue your inclination to go from hence, and remain, &c.

STEEVENS.

317. *No jocund health,*——] The king's intemperance is very strongly impressed ; every thing that happens to him gives him occasion to drink.

JOHNSON.

322. —resolve *itself into a dew!*] *Resolve* means the same as *dissolve*. Ben Jonson uses the word in his *Volpone*, and in the same sense :

" Forth the *resolved* corners of his eyes."

Again, in the *Country Girl*, 1647 :

" ——my swoln grief *resolved* in these tears."

STEEVENS.

323. *Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd*
His canon *'gainst self-slaughter!*——] The generality of the editions read thus, as if the poet's thoughts were, Or *that the Almighty had not planted his* artillery, *or* arms *of* vengeance, *against self-murder*. But the word which I restored (and which was espoused by the accurate Mr. Hughes, who gave an edition of this play) is the true reading, *i. e. that he had not restrained suicide by his* express law *and* peremptory prohibition. THEOBALD.

There are yet those who suppose the old reading to be the true one, as they say the word *fixed* seems to decide very strongly in its favour. I would advise such to recollect Virgil's expression :

" ——*fixit* leges pretio, atque *refixit*."

STEEVENS.

331.

331. *So excellent a king ; that was, to this,*

Hyperion *to a Satyr :*——] This similitude at first sight seems to be a little far-fetched ; but it has an exquisite beauty. By the *Satyr* is meant *Pan*, as by *Hyperion*, *Apollo* ; *Pan* and *Apollo* were brothers, and the allusion is to the contention between those gods for the preference in musick. WARBURTON.

All our English poets are guilty of the same false quantity, and call Hypĕrīon Hypērĭon ; at least the only instance I have met with to the contrary is in the old play of *Fuimus Troes*, 1633 :

" —Blow, gentle Africus,
" Play on our poops, when Hypĕrīon's son
" Should couch in West." STEEVENS.

333. In former editions,

That he permitted not *the winds of heaven*] This is a sophistical reading, copied from the players in some of the modern editions, for want of understanding the poet, whose text is corrupt in the old impressions : all of which that I have had the fortune to see, concur in reading,

——*So loving to my mother,*
That he might not beteene *the winds of heaven*
Visit her face too roughly.

Beteene is a corruption without doubt, but not so inveterate a one, but that, by the change of a single letter, and the separation of two words mistakenly jumbled together, I am verily persuaded, I have retrieved the poet's reading——*That he might not* let e'en *the winds of heaven*, &c. THEOBALD.

So in the enterlude of *The Lyfe and Repentance of Marie Magdalaine*, &c. by Lewis Wager, 1567:

" But evermore they were unto me very tender,
" They would not *suffer* the *wynde* on me to blowe."

STEEVENS.

So, again, in Marston's *Insatiate Countess*, 1603:

" ——she had a lord,
" Jealous that the air should ravish her chaste looks."

MALONE.

Notwithstanding the ingenuity of Mr. Theobald's conjecture, I believe the old reading to be the true one. The rejected word occurs in a *Letter of Sir John Paston to his Brother*, though, as I conceive, not rightly explained by Mr. Fenn. See Vol. II. let. 30, p. 30. " As ffor Mestresse Kateryne Dudle, I have many tymes recomandyd yow to hyr, and she is noo thynge displeasyd w^t^ itt; she rekkythe not howe many Gentylmen love hyr, she is ffull of love, I have *betyn* the mat' ffor yow, your onknowleche as I tolde hyr.—"

To *beteene*, in Shakspere, signifies *admit*:—as used by Sir John Paston, to *impart*.

HENLEY.

341. *Like Niobe, all tears:*——] Shakspere caught this idea from an ancient ballad entitled, *The falling out of Lovers is the renewing of Love:*

" Now I, like weeping *Niobe*,
" May wash my handes in teares," &c.

Of this ballad *Amantium iræ*, &c. is the burden.

STEEVENS.

356. —*I'll change that name*—] I'll be your servant, you shall be my friend. JOHNSON.

357. —*what make you*——] A familiar phrase for *what are you doing*. JOHNSON.

360. —*good even, sir.*] So the copies. Sir T. Hanmer and Dr. Warburton put it *good morning*. The alteration is of no importance, but all licence is dangerous. There is no need of any change. Between the first and eighth scene of this act it is apparent that a natural day must pass, and now much of it is already over, there is nothing that can determine. The king has held a council. It may now as well be *evening* as *morning*. JOHNSON.

373. —*the funeral bak'd meats*] It was anciently the general custom to give a cold entertainment to mourners at a funeral. In distant counties this practice is continued among the yeomanry. See *The Tragique Historie of the Fairie Valeria of London*, 1598: "His corpes was with funerall pompe conveyed to the church, and there sollemnly entered, nothing omitted which necessitie or custom could claime; a sermon, a *banquet*, and like observations."

COLLINS.

375. —*dearest*—] For *direst*, most dreadful, most dangerous. JOHNSON.

Dearest is *most immediate, consequential, important.* So in *Romeo and Juliet*:

"——a ring that I must use
"In *dear* employment."

Again, in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Maid in the Mill*:

" You meet your *dearest* enemy in love,
" With all his hate about him." STEEVENS.

379. *In my mind's eye,——*] This expression occurs again in our author's *Rape of Lucrece*:

" ——himself behind
" Was left unseen, save to *the eye of mind*."

Ben Jonson has borrowed it in his Masque called *Love's Triumph through Callipolis*:

" As only by *the mind's eye* may be seen."

Telemachus lamenting the absence of Ulysses, is represented in like manner:

Ὀσσομένος πατέρ' ἐσθλὸν ἐνὶ φρεσὶν,— STEEVENS.

382. I *shall not look upon his like again.*] Mr. Holt proposes to read, from an emendation by Sir Thomas Samwell, Bart. of Upton near Northampton:

" *Eye* shall not look upon his like again;"

and thinks it is more in the true spirit of Shakspere, than the other. STEEVENS.

So St. Paul: " *Eye* hath not seen, ear hath not heard," &c. * * *.

387. Season *your admiration*—] That is, *temper* it. JOHNSON.

394. *In the dead* waste *and middle of the night,*] The quarto, 1637, reads—*vast*, which may be right. So, in *The Tempest*:

" ——————urchins,
" Shall for that *vast* of night that they may work,
" All exercise on thee."

The folio has not *waste*, but *wast*. MALONE.

396. *Arm'd at all points,*——] Thus the folio. The quartos—*armed at point.* STEEVENS.

401. —*with the* act *of fear,*] Shakspere could never write so improperly as to call the *passion of fear*, the *act of fear*. Without doubt the true reading is,

——*with* th' effect *of fear.* WARBURTON.

Here is an affectation of subtilty without accuracy. *Fear* is every day considered as an *agent*. *Fear laid hold on him*; *fear drove him away*. If it were proper to be rigorous in examining trifles, it might be replied, that Shakspere would write more erroneously, if he wrote by the direction of this critick; they were not *distilled*, whatever the word may mean, *by the effect of fear*; for that *distillation* was itself *the effect*; *fear* was the cause, the active cause that *distilled* them by that force of operation which we strictly call *act* involuntary, and *power* in involuntary *agents*, but popularly call *act* in both. But of this too much. JOHNSON.

The folio reads—*bes*til'd. STEEVENS.

465. *My father's spirit in arms!*——] From what went before, I once hinted to Mr. Garrick, that these words might be spoken in this manner:

My father's spirit! in arms! all is not well.——

WHALLEY.

478. *The perfume, and* suppliance *of a minute*;] Thus the quarto: the folio has it,

——*Sweet, not lasting,*
The suppliance of a minute. JOHNSON.

The perfume, and *suppliance* of a minute; *i. e.* what is supplied to us for a minute. The idea seems

to be taken from the short duration of vegetable perfumes. STEEVENS.

483. *In* thews,——] *i. e.* in sinews, muscular strength. STEEVENS.

486. *And now no soil*, nor cautel,—] From *cautela*, which signifies only a *prudent foresight* or caution; but, passing through French hands, it lost its innocence, and now signifies *fraud*, *deceit*. And so he uses the adjective in *Julius Cæsar*:

"Swear priests and cowards, and men *cautelous*."

But I believe Shakspere wrote,

And now no soil of *cautel*—

which the following words confirm:

——*doth* besmirch
The virtue *of his will*:—

For by *virtue* is meant the *simplicity* of his will, not *virtuous will*: and both this and *besmirch* refer only to *soil*, and to the soil *of* craft and insincerity.

WARBURTON.

So in the second part of Greene's *Art of Coney-catching*, 1592: "—and their subtill *cautels* to amend the statute." *To amend the statute* was the cant phrase for evading the law. STEEVENS.

This word is again used in our author's *Lover's Complaints*:

"In him a plenitude of subtle matter,
"Applied to *cautels*, all strange forms receives."

MALONE.

Virtue seems here to comprise both *excellence* and *power*, and may be explained the *pure effect*. JOHNSON.

503.

503. —*unmaster'd*—] i. e. *licentious.* JOHNSON.

507. *The* chariest *maid*——] *Chary* is cautious. So in Greene's *Never too Late*, 1616: "Love requires not chastity, but that her soldiers be *chary*." Again, "She liveth chastly enough, that liveth *charily*."

STEEVENS.

522. —recks *not his own* read.] That is, heeds not his own lessons. POPE.

So in *Hycke Scorner*:

"——I *reck* not a feder."

Ben Jonson uses the word *reed* in his *Catiline*:

"So that thou couldst not move
"Against a publick *reed*." STEEVENS.

So Sternhold, Psalm I.

"——that hath not lent
"To wicked *rede* his ear." BLACKSTONE.

530. *And these few precepts in thy* memory
Look thou character.——] *i. e.* engrave, imprint. The same phrase is again used by our author in his 122d Sonnet:

"——thy tables are within my brain
"Full *character'd* in lasting *memory*."

Again, in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*:

"————————I do conjure thee,
"Who art the table wherein all my thoughts
"Are visibly *character'd* and engrav'd."

MALONE.

536. *But do not dull thy palm with entertainment*
Of each new-hatch'd, unfledg'd comrade.——]

The literal sense is, *Do not make thy palm callous by shaking*

shaking every man by the hand. The figurative meaning may be, *Do not, by promiscuous conversation, make thy mind insensible to the difference of characters.* JOHNSON.

541. —*each man's* censure,——] *Censure* is opinion. STEEVENS.

546. *Are most select, and generous chief, in that.*] *Chief* is an *adjective* used *adverbially*, a practice common to our author. Chiefly generous. Yet it must be owned that the punctuation recommended is very stiff and harsh. STEEVENS.

Here has been a silent deviation in all the modern editions from the old copies, which all read,

Are *of a* most select and generous *chef* in that.

May we suppose that Shakspere borrowed the word *chef* from heraldry, with which he seems to have been very conversant? *They in France approve themselves to be of a most select and generous* escutcheon *by their dress.* *Chef* in heraldry is the upper third part of the shield. —This is very harsh; yet I hardly think that the words "*of a*" could have been introduced without some authority from the MS. MALONE.

The genuine meaning of the passage requires us to point the line thus:

Are most select and generous, chief in that.

i. e. the nobility of France are select and generous above all other nations, and chiefly in the point of apparel; the richness and elegance of their dress. REMARKS.

551. *And it must follow, as the* night *the day,*] So in the 145th Sonnet of Shakspere:

"That

" That follow'd it *as gentle day*
" *Doth follow night*," &c. STEEVENS.

553. —*my blessing* season *this in thee!*] *Season*, for *infuse*. WARBURTON.

It is more than to *infuse*, it is to infix it in such a manner as that it may never wear out. JOHNSON.

So in the mock tragedy represented before the king:

" —who in want a hollow friend did try,
" Directly *seasons* him his enemy." STEEVENS.

555. *The time* invites *you*;—] Macbeth says,

" I go, and it is done, the bell *invites* me."
STEEVENS.

—*your servants tend*] *i. e.* your servants are waiting for you. JOHNSON.

559. —*yourself shall keep the key of it.*] The meaning is, that your counsels are so sure of remaining locked up in my memory, as if yourself carried the key of it. So in *Northward Hoe*, by Decker and Webster, 1607: " You shall close it up like a treasure of your own, and yourself *shall keep the key of it.*"
STEEVENS.

575. Unsifted *in such perilous circumstance.*] *Unsifted*, for *untried.*] *Untried* signifies either not *tempted*, or not *refined*; *Unsifted* signifies the *latter* only, though the sense requires the *former*. WARBURTON.

585. —fashion *you may call it*;—] She uses *fashion* for *manner*, and he for a *transient practice*. JOHNSON.

588. —*springes to catch woodcocks.*——] A proverbial saying,

" Every

"Every woman has a *springe to catch a woodcock.*"

STEEVENS.

595. *Set your entreatments*——] *Entreatments* here mean *company, conversation,* from the French *entrétien.*

JOHNSON.

598. ——*larger* tether—] *Tether* is a string by which any animal is fastened, whether for the sake of feeding, or the air. STEEVENS.

600. *Do not believe his* vows: *for they are* brokers;] A *broker* in old English meant a *bawd* or *pimp*. See the Glossary to Gawin Douglasses Translation of Virgil, in verb. *Broker*. MALONE.

603. *Breathing like sanctified and pious* bonds,] Do not believe (says Polonius to his daughter) Hamlet's amorous vows made *to you*; which pretend religion in them *(the better to beguile)*, like those sanctified and pious vows [*or bonds*] made *to heaven.* And why should not this *pass without suspicion?* WARBURTON.

We have in our author's 142d Sonnet:

"——false *bonds* of love." MALONE.

618. —*take his* rouse,] A *rouse* is a large dose of liquor, a debauch. So in *Othello*:

"——they have given me a *rouse* already."

It should seem from the following passage in Decker's *Guls Hornbook*, 1609, that the word *rouse* was of Danish extraction. "Teach me, thou soveraigne skinker, how to take the German's upsy freeze, the *Danish rousa,* the Switzer's stoop of rhenish," &c.

STEEVENS.

619.

619. *Keeps wassel*] So in *Macbeth*; and, again, in *The Hog hath lost his Pearl*, 1614:

"By Crœsus' name and by his castle,
"Where winter nights he keepeth *wassel*."

STEEVENS.

—*the swagg'ring* up-spring—] It appears from the following passage in *Alphonsus, Emperor of Germany*, by Chapman, that the *up-spring* was a *German dance*:

"We Germans have no changes in our dances;
"An *almain* and an *up-spring*, that is all."

The word is used by G. Douglas, in his Translation of Virgil, and I think, by Chaucer. Again, in an old Scots proverb:—"Another would play a *spring* ere you tune your pipes." STEEVENS.

628. *This* heavy-headed *revel, east and west.*] This *heavy-headed* revel makes us traduced east and west, and taxed of other nations. JOHNSON.

This heavy-headed revel—] From this to the entrance of the Ghost has been restored from the quarto; these lines not being in the folio. MALONE.

633. *The pith and marrow of our attribute.*] The best and most valuable part of the praise that would be otherwise attributed to us. JOHNSON.

638. —*complexion*,] *i. e.* humour; as sanguine, melancholy, phlegmatick, &c. WARBURTON.

645. *As infinite as man may undergo*,] As large as can be accumulated upon man. JOHNSON.

648. *Doth all the noble substance of worth out*,] Various conjectures have been employed about this passage. As I understand it, there is little difficulty.

This

This is one of the low colloquial phrases which at present are neither employed in writing, nor perhaps are reconcileable to the propriety of language. To *do a thing out*, is *to extinguish it*, or *to efface* or *obliterate any thing painted or written.*

In the first of these significations it is used by Drayton, in the 5th Canto of his *Barons Wars*:

"Was ta'n in battle, and his eyes *out-done.*"

STEEVENS.

651. *Angels and ministers of grace defend us!*] Hamlet's speech to the apparition of his father seems to me to consist of three parts. When first he sees the spectre, he fortifies himself with an invocation:

Angels and ministers of grace defend us!

As the spectre approaches, he deliberates with himself, and determines, that whatever it be, he will venture to address it.

Be thou a spirit of health, or goblin damn'd,
Bring with thee airs from heaven, or blasts from hell,
Be thy intents wicked, or charitable,
Thou com'st in such a questionable shape,
That I will speak to thee. I'll call thee, &c.

This he says while his father is advancing; he then, as he had determined, *speaks to him*, and *calls him*—*Hamlet, King, Father, Royal Dane! oh! answer me.*

JOHNSON.

652. *Be thou a spirit of health, or goblin damn'd,* &c.] So in *Acolastus his After-wit*, 1600:

" Art thou a god, a man, or else a ghost ?
" Com'st thou from heaven, where bliss and solace dwells ?
" Or from the airie cold-engendring coast ?
" Or from the darksome dungeon-hold of hell?"

The first known edition of this play is in 1604.

The same question occurs also in the MS. known by the title of *William and Werwolf*, in the Library of King's College, Cambridge, p. 36.

" Whether thou be a god, gost in goddis name that speakest,
" Or any foul fend fourmed in this wise,
" And if we schul of the hent harme or gode."

STEEVENS.

655. —*questionable shape*,] By *questionable* is meant provoking question. HANMER.

So in *Macbeth* :

" Live you, or are you aught
" That man may *question?*" JOHNSON.

Questionable, I believe, means only *propitious to conversation, easy and willing to be conversed with.* So in *As You Like It* : " An *unquestionable* spirit, which you have not." *Unquestionable*, in this last instance, certainly signifies *unwilling to be talked with.*

STEEVENS.

Questionable, I believe, only means *capable of being conversed with.* *To question* certainly in our author's time signified *to converse.* MALONE.

658. ———*tell,*

Why thy canoniz'd bones, hearsed in death,

Have burst their cearments?] Hamlet, amazed at an apparition, which, though in all ages credited, has in all ages been considered as the most wonderful and most dreadful operation of supernatural agency, inquires of the spectre, in the most emphatick terms, why he breaks the order of nature, by returning from the dead; this he asks in a very confused circumlocution, confounding in his fright the soul and body. Why, says he, have *thy bones*, which with due ceremonies have been entombed *in death*, in the common state of departed mortals, *burst* the folds in which they were embalmed? Why has the tomb, in which we saw thee quietly laid, opened his mouth, that mouth which, by its weight and stability, seemed closed for ever; the whole sentence is this: *Why dost thou appear, whom we know to be dead?*

Had the change of the word removed any obscurity, or added any beauty, it might have been worth a struggle; but either reading leaves the sense the same.

If there be any asperity in this controversial note, it must be imputed to the contagion of peevishness, or some resentment of the incivility shewn to the Oxford editor, who is represented as supposing the ground *canonized* by a funeral, when he only meant to say, that the *body* was deposited in *holy ground*, in ground consecrated according to the *canon*.

JOHNSON.

661. —*quietly* in-urn'd,] The quartos read *interr'd*.
STEEVENS.

664. *That thou, dead corse, again, in complete steel,*] It is probable that Shakspere introduced his ghost in armour, that it might appear more solemn by such a discrimination from the other characters; though it was really the custom of the Danish kings to be buried in that manner. Vide *Olaus Wormius*, cap. 7.

" Struem regi nec vestibus, nec odoribus cumulant, *sua cuique arma*, quorundam igni et equus adjicitur.

" ——sed postquam magnanimus ille Danorum rex collem sibi magnitudinis conspicuæ extruxisset (cui post obitum regio diademate exornatum), *armis indutum*, inferendum esset cadaver," &c. STEEVENS.

666. ——*we* fools of nature] The expression is fine, as intimating we were only kept (as formerly, fools in a great family) to make sport for nature, who lay hid only to mock and laugh at us, for our vain searches into her mysteries. WARBURTON.

667. ——*to shake our* disposition] *Disposition*, for *frame*. WARBURTON.

688. —deprive *your sovereignty*, &c.] Dr. Warburton would read *deprave*; but several proofs are given in the notes to *King Lear*, of Shakspere's use of the word *deprive*, which is the true reading.
STEEVENS.

I believe *deprive* in this place signifies simply to *take away*. JOHNSON.

690. *The very place*——] The four following lines added from the first edition. POPE.

690. —*puts* toys *of desperation,*] See *Richard III.* act i. sc. 1. REED.

703. ——*that* lets *me*:] That *hinders*, or *stops* me. * * *.

709. *Heaven will* direct it.] Marcellus answers Horatio's question, "To what issue will this come?" and Horatio also answers it himself with a pious resignation, "Heaven will *direct* it." BLACKSTONE.

724. *Doom'd for a certain time to walk the night;*
And, for the day, confin'd to fast *in fires.*]
Chaucer has a similar passage with regard to punishments of hell. *Parson's Tale*, p. 193. Mr. Urry's edition: "And moreover the misese of hell, shall be in defaute of *mete* and drinke." SMITH.

Nash, in his *Pierce Penniless's Supplication to the Devil*, 1595, has the same idea: "Whether it be a place of horror, stench, and darkness, where men *see meat, but can get none*, and are ever thirsty," &c. So likewise at the conclusion of an ancient pamphlet called *The Wyll of the Devyll*, bl. let. no date:

"Thou shalt lye in frost and *fire*
"With sicknesse and *hunger*," &c.

STEEVENS.

727. *Are burnt and purg'd away.*—] Gawin Douglas really changes the Platonick hell into the "punytion of Saulis in purgatory;" and it is observable, that when the ghost informs Hamlet of his doom there,

"Till the foul crimes, done in my days of nature,
"Are *burnt and purg'd away.*—"

The

The expression is very similar to the bishop's: I will give you his version as concisely as I can; "It is a nedeful thyng to suffer panis and torment—Sum in the wyndis, sum under the watter, and the fire uthir sum: thus the mony vices—

"Contrakkit in the corpis be *done away*
"*And purgit.*"——

Sixte Book of Eneados, fol. p. 191.

FARMER.

Shakspere might have found this expression in the *Hystorie of Hamblet*, bl. let. F. 2. edit. 1608: "He set fire in the foure corners of the hal, in such sort, that of all that were as then therein not one escaped away, but were forced *to purge their sinnes by fire.*"

MALONE.

Shakspere talks more like a Papist, than a Platonist; but the language of bishop Douglas is that of a good Protestant:

"Thus the mony vices
"Contrakkit in the corpis be done away
"And purgit."——

These are the very words of our Liturgy, in the commendatory prayer for a sick person at the point of departure, in the office for the visitation of the sick;" ——*Whatsoever defilements it may have contracted*—— *being purged and done away.* WHALLEY.

744. *As* meditation, *or the thoughts of love,*] This similitude is extremely beautiful. The word *meditation* is consecrated, by the *mysticks*, to signify that stretch and flight of mind which aspires to the enjoyment of

the supreme good. So that Hamlet, considering with what to compare the swiftness of his revenge, chooses two of the most rapid things in nature, the ardency of divine and human passion, in an *enthusiast* and a *lover*. WARBURTON.

The comment on the word *meditation* is so ingenious, that I hope it is just. JOHNSON.

747. *And duller should'st thou be than the fat weed*
That rots itself in ease on Lethe's wharf, &c.]
Shakspere, apparently through ignorance, makes Roman Catholicks of these Pagan Danes; and here gives a description of purgatory; but yet mixes it with the Pagan fable of Lethe's wharf. Whether he did it to insinuate to the zealous Protestants of his time, that the Pagan and Popish purgatory stood both upon the same footing of credibility, or whether it was by the same kind of licentious inadvertance that Michael Angelo brought Charon's bark into his picture of the Last Judgment, is not easy to decide.
WARBURTON.

That rots *itself*, &c.] The quarto reads—That *roots* itself. Mr. Pope follows it. Otway has the same thought:

" ——like a coarse and useless dunghill weed
" Fix'd to one spot, and *rot* just as I grow."

The superiority of the reading of the folio is to me apparent: to be in a crescent state (i. e. to *root itself*) affords an idea of activity; to *rot* better suits with the dulness and inaction to which the Ghost refers. Nevertheless,

Nevertheless, the accusative case *(itself)* may seem to demand the verb *roots*. STEEVENS.

774. —*mine orchard,*] *Orchard* for *garden*. So, in *Romeo and Juliet:*

"The *orchard* walls are high, and hard to climb."

STEEVENS.

Orchard was anciently written *hortyard*, and signified a yard set apart for a garden. * * *.

777. *With juice of cursed* hebenon *in a vial,*] The word here used was more probably designed by a *metathesis*, either of the poet or transcriber, for *henebon*, that is, *henbane*; of which the most common kind *(hyoscyamus niger)* is certainly *narcotick*, and perhaps, if taken in a considerable quantity, might prove poisonous. Galen calls it cold in the third degree; by which in this, as well as *opium*, he seems not to mean an actual coldness, but the power it has of benumbing the faculties. These qualities have been confirmed by several cases related in modern observations. In Wepfer we have a good account of the various effects of this root upon most of the members of a *convent* in Germany, who eat of it for supper by mistake, mixed with succory;—heat in the throat, giddiness, dimness of sight, and delirium.

Cicut. Aquatic. c. 18.

GREY.

Thus, in the Philosopher's 4th Satire of Mars, by Robert Anton, 1616:

"The poison'd *Henbane* whose cold juice doth kill."

In

In *Marlow's Jew of Malta*, 1633, the word is written in a different manner,

" ——the blood of Hydra, Lerna's bane,
" The juice of *Hebon*, and Cocytus' breath."
STEEVENS.

790. ——*at once* dispatch'd:] *Dispatch'd*, for *bereft*. WARBURTON.

791. *Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin*, &c.] The very words of this part of the speech are taken (as I have been informed by a gentleman of undoubted veracity) from an old *Legends of Saints*, where a man, who was accidentally drowned, is introduced as making the same complaint. STEEVENS.

792. *Unhousel'd.*——] Without the sacrament being taken. POPE.

Unaneal'd;] No knell rung. POPE.

In other editions,

Unhouzzled, unanointed, unaneal'd:

The ghost, having recounted the process of his murder, proceeds to exaggerate the inhumanity and unnaturalness of the fact, from the circumstance in which he was surprised. But these, I find, have been stumbling blocks to our editors; and therefore I must amend and explain these three compound adjectives in their order. Instead of *unhouzzel'd*, we must restore, *unhousel'd*, i. e. *without the sacrament taken*; from the old Saxon word for the sacrament, *housel*. In the next place, *unanointed* is a sophistication of the text; the old copies concur in reading, *disappointed*. I correct,

Unhousel'd,

Unhousel'd, unappointed,——

i. e. no confession of sins made, no reconciliation to heaven, no appointment of penance by the church. *Unaneal'd* I agree to be the poet's genuine word; but I must take the liberty to dispute Mr. Pope's explication of it, *viz.* no *knell* rung. The adjective formed from *knell* must have been *unknell'd*, or *unknoll'd*. There is no rule in orthography for sinking the *k* in the deflection of any verb or compound formed from *knell*, and melting it into a vowel. What sense does *unaneal'd* then bear? Skinner, in his Lexicon of old and obsolete English terms, tells us, that *aneal'd* is *unctus*; from the Teutonick prepostion *an*, and *ole*, i. e. *oil*: so that *unaneal'd* must consequently signify, *unanointed*, not having the *extreme unction*. The poet's reading and explication being ascertained, he very finely makes his *ghost* complain of these four dreadful hardships: that he had been dispatched out of life without receiving the *hoste*, or sacrament; without being *reconcil'd* to heaven and *absolv'd*; without the benefit of *extreme unction*; or without so much as a *confession* made of his sins. The having no *knell* rung, I think, is not a point of equal consequence to any of these; especially, if we consider, that the Romish church admits the efficacy of *praying* for the *dead*.

THEOBALD.

This is a very difficult line. I think Theobald's objection to the sense of *unaneal'd*, for *notified by the bell*, must be owned to be very strong. I have not yet by my inquiry satisfied myself. Hanmer's explication

cation of *unaneal'd* by *unprepar'd*, because to *anneal* metals, is to *prepare* them in manufacture, is too general and vague; there is no resemblance between any funeral ceremony and the practice of *annealing* metals.

Disappointed is the same as *unappointed*, and may be properly explained *unprepared*; a man well furnished with things necessary for any enterprize, was said to be well *appointed*. JOHNSON.

Dr. Johnson's explanation of the word *disappointed* may be countenanced by the advice which Isabella gives to her brother in *Measure for Measure*:

"Therefore your best *appointment* make with speed."

The hope of gaining a worthless alliteration is all that can tempt an editor to prefer *unappointed*, or *unanointed*, to *disappointed*. STEEVENS.

Unhousel'd,] The following passage from Holinshed will at once furnish an example of the use, and an explanation of the sense, of this expression:—"The cardinall song masse,—the king and queene descended, and before the high aulter they wer both *houseled*, with one host devided between them."

disappointed,] Stowe, in his account of the execution of Sir Charles Davers, observes, "that having put off his gown and doublet in a most cheerful manner, rather like a bridegroom, than a prisoner APPOINTED *for death*, he prayed very devoutly."

unaneal'd;] Sir Thomas Moore:——"the byshop sendeth oyle to the curates, because they should therewith

therewith annoynt the sicke in the sacrament of *anoyling*."—And again,—"The extreme unccion or *aneyling*—." HENLEY.

795. *O, horrible! O, horrible! most horrible!*] It was ingeniously hinted to me by a very learned lady, that this line seems to belong to Hamlet, in whose mouth it is a proper and natural exclamation; and who, according to the practice of the stage, may be supposed to interrupt so long a speech. JOHNSON.

798. *A couch for* luxury——] *i. e.* for *lewdness.* STEEVENS.

805. —*to pale his uneffectual fire:*] *i. e.* shining without heat. WARBURTON.

To *pale* is a verb used by Lady *Elizabeth Carew*, in her *Tragedy of Mariam*, 1613:

"—Death can *pale* as well
"A cheek of roses as a cheek less bright."

Uneffectual fire, I believe, rather means, fire that is no longer seen when the light of morning approaches. So, in *Pericles Prince of Tyre*, 1609:

"——like a *glow-worm*,——
"The which hath fire in darkness, none in light." STEEVENS.

806. *Adieu! adieu! adieu!* &c.] The folio reads:

Adieu, adieu, *Hamlet!* remember me. STEEVENS.

812. —*this distracted globe*——] *i. e.* in this head confused with thought. STEEVENS.

813. *Yea, from* the table of my memory] This expression is used by Sir Philip Sydney in his *Defence of Poesie*. MALONE.

822. *My* tables,—*meet it is, I set it down,*] Hamlet avails himself of the same caution observed by the doctor in the fifth act of *Macbeth* : "I will set down what comes from her, to satisfy my remembrance the more strongly." STEEVENS.

825. —*Now to my word* ;] Hamlet alludes to the *watch-word* given every day in military service, which at this time he says is, *Adieu, adieu, remember me.*

So, in *The Devil's Charter*, a tragedy, 1607 :

"Now to my *watch-word*." STEEVENS.

833. —*come, bird, come.*] This is the call which falconers use to their hawk in the air when they would have him come down to them. HANMER.

This expression is used in *Marston's Dutch Courtesan*, and by many others among the old dramatick writers.

It appears from all these passages, that it was the falconer's call, as Hanmer has observed.

STEEVENS.

846. *There needs no ghost*, &c.] This piece of humour is repeated by our author in *Timon*, &c. act v. sc. 2. STEEVENS.

859. —*by St.* Patrick,—] How the poet comes to make Hamlet swear by St. Patrick, I know not. However, at this time all the whole northern world had their learning from Ireland ; to which place it had retired, and there flourished under the auspices of this Saint. But it was, I suppose, only said at random ; for he makes Hamlet a student of Wittenburg.

WARBURTON.

876.

876. —*true-penny?*] This word, as well as some of Hamlet's former exclamations, we find in the *Malecontent*, 1604. STEEVENS.

881. *Swear by my sword.*] Every extract from Dr. Farmer's pamphlet must prove as instructive to the reader as the following:

"In the *Passus Primus* of Pierce Plowman,

"David in his daies dubbed knightes,

"And did them *swere on her sword* to serve truth ever."

To the authority produced from Dr. Farmer, the following may be added from *Holinshed*, p. 664: "Warwick kissed the cross of king Edward's sword, as it were a vow to his promise."

Again, p. 1038, it is said, "that Warwick drew out his sword, which other of the honourable and worshipful that were then present likewise did, whom he commanded, that each one should kiss other's sword, according to an ancient custom amongst men of war in time of great danger; and herewith they made a solemn vow," &c.

Again, in an ancient MS. of which some account is given in a note on the first scene of the first act of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, the oath taken by a *master of defence* when his degree was conferred on him, is preserved and runs as follows: "First, you shall sweare (so help you God and halidome, and by all the christendome which God gave you at the fount-stone, and by *the crosse of this sword which doth represent unto*

you the crosse which our Saviour Jesus Christe sufered his most payneful deathe upon, that you shall upholde, maynteyne, and kepe to your power all soch articles as shal be heare declared unto you, and receve in the presence of me your maister, and these the rest of the maisters my brethren heare with me at this tyme."

STEEVENS.

892. *And therefore as a stranger give it welcome.*] *i. e.* receive it to yourself; take it under your own roof; as much as to say, *Keep it secret.* Alluding to the laws of hospitality. WARBURTON.

906. —*denote*] The old copies concur in reading *to note.* The alteration, which seems necessary, is Theobald's. STEEVENS.

It we read "*Nor* by pronouncing," the passage as it stands in the folio, though embarrassed, is still intelligible, provided the punctuation be changed.

That you, at such time seeing me, never shall
With arms encumber'd thus, or thus, head shake;
Nor by pronouncing of some doubtful phrase,
As, *well, we know,* or *we could and if we would,*
Or, *if we list to speake*; or, *there be and if there might,*
Or such ambiguous giving out, to note
That you know aught of me; this not to do
(So grace and mercy at your most need help you!)
Swear.

MALONE.

Mr.

Mr. Theobald did not go so far back into the context as he ought, before he made this alteration; else he would have perceived that it must destroy the sense of the passage. The connexion of which is:— "Here, *swear*, as before, never, so help you mercy! how strange or odd soe'er I bear myself, TO *note* that you know aught of me." HENLEY.

907. —*This do you swear*, &c.] The folio reads, *this not to do.* STEEVENS.

ACT II.

Line 1. THE quartos read, *Enter old Polonius with his man or two.* STEEVENS.

8. ——*Danskers*——] *Danske* (in Warner's Albion's England) is the ancient name of Denmark. STEEVENS.

27. —*drinking*, fencing, *swearing*,] I suppose, by *fencing* is meant a too diligent frequentation of the fencing-school, a resort of violent and lawless young men. JOHNSON.

36. *A* savageness—] *Savageness*, for *wildness*. WARBURTON.

37. *Of general assault.*] *i. e.* such as youth in general is liable to. WARBURTON.

43. *And, I believe, it is a fetch of* warrant:] So the folio. The quarto reads,—a fetch of *wit.*

STEEVENS.

47. —*prenominate* crimes,] *i. e.* crimes already named.

STEEVENS.

75. —in *yourself.*] Hanmer reads, *e'en* yourself, and is followed by Dr. Warburton; but perhaps, *in* yourself means, *in your own person,* not by spies.

JOHNSON.

84. —*his stockings* foul'd,

Ungarter'd, and down-gyved *to his ancle*;] I believe *gyved* to be nothing more than a false print. *Down-gyved* means hanging down like the loose cincture which confines the fetters round the ancles. *Gyre* always signifies a circle formed by a top, or any other body when put into motion.

STEEVENS.

110. —foredoes *itself,*] To *foredo* is to destroy. So, in *Othello:*

"That either makes me, or *foredoes* me quite."

STEEVENS.

120. *I had not* quoted *him*:—] The old quarto reads *coted.*

To *quote* on this occasion undoubtedly means to *observe.*

STEEVENS.

122. ——*it is as proper to our age*

To cast beyond ourselves in our opinions,

As it is common for the younger sort

To lack discretion.—] This is not the remark of a weak man. The vice of age is too much suspicion.

picion. Men long accustomed to the wiles of life *cast* commonly *beyond themselves*, let their cunning go further than reason can attend it. This is always the fault of a little mind, made artful by long commerce with the world. JOHNSON.

The quartos read—*By heaven* it is as proper, &c. STEEVENS.

126. *This must be known; which, being kept close, might move*

More grief to hide, than hate to utter love.] *i. e.* This must be made known to the king, for (being kept secret) the hiding Hamlet's love might occasion more mischief to us from him and the queen, than the uttering or revealing of it will occasion hate and resentment from Hamlet. JOHNSON.

143. —*and* humour] Thus the folio. The quartos read, *haviour*. STEEVENS.

145. *Whether aught*, &c.] This line is omitted in the folio. STEEVENS.

150. *To shew us so much* gentry—] *Gentry*, for *complaisance*. WARBURTON.

152. *For the supply*, &c.] That the hope which your arrival has raised may be completed by the desired effect. JOHNSON.

160. —*in the full* bent,] *The full bent* is *the utmost extremity of exertion*. The allusion is to a bow bent as far as it will go. So afterwards in this play:

"They fool me to *top* of my *bent*." MALONE.

178. —*the* trail *of policy*—] The *trail* is the *course of an animal pursued by the scent.* JOHNSON.

183. —*the* fruit—] The *desert* after the meat. JOHNSON.

198. —*borne in hand*—] *i. e.* deceived, imposed on. STEEVENS.

204. —*annual* fee.] *Fee* in this place signifies *reward, recompence.*

So, in *All's Well that Ends Well:*

"—Not helping death's my *fee*;

"But if I help, what do you promise me?"

The word is commonly used in Scotland, for *wages*, as we say *lawyer's fee, physician's fee.* STEEVENS.

Mr. Reed hath restored the reading of the folio. The author of THE REMARKS explains it thus, "the king gave his nephew a *feud* or *fee* (in land) of that yearly value." EDITOR.

216. —*at night we'll feast*—] The king's intemperance is never suffered to be forgotten. JOHNSON.

219. *My liege, and madam, to expostulate*] The strokes of humour in this speech are admirable. Polonius's character is that of a weak, pedant, minister of state. His declamation is a fine satire on the impertinent oratory then in vogue, which placed reason in the formality of method, and wit in the gingle and play of words. With what art is he made to pride himself in his *wit:*

That he is mad, 'tis true: 'tis true, 'tis pity:
And pity 'tis, 'tis true: A foolish figure,
But farewel it———

And

And how exquisitely does the poet ridicule the *reasoning in fashion*, where he makes Polonius remark on Hamlet's madness:

Though this be madness, *yet there's* method *in't:*

As if method, which the wits of that age thought the most essential quality of a good discourse, would make amends for the madness. It was *madness* indeed, yet Polonius could comfort himself with this reflection, that at least it was *method*. It is certain Shakspere excels in nothing more than in the preservation of his characters: *To this life and variety of character* (says our great poet in his admirable preface to Shakspere) *we must add the wonderful preservation.* We have said what is the character of Polonius; and it is allowed on all hands to be drawn with wonderful life and spirit, yet the *unity* of it has been thought by some to be grossly violated in the excellent *precepts* and *instructions* which Shakspere makes his statesman give to his son and servant in the middle of the *first*, and beginning of the *second act*. But I will venture to say, these criticks have not entered into the poet's art and address in this particular. He had a mind to ornament his scenes with those fine lessons of social life; but his Polonius was too weak to be author of them, though he was pedant enough to have met with them in his reading, and fop enough to get them by heart, and retail them for his own. And this the poet has finely shewn us was the case, where, in the middle of Polonius's instructions to his servant, he

makes

makes him, though without having received any interruption, forget his lesson, and say,

And then, sir, does he this;

He does——What was I about to say?

I was about to say something——where did I leave?

The servant replies,

At, closes in the consequence. This sets Polonius right, and he goes on,

At, closes in the consequence.

——*Ay marry,*

He closes thus:——I know the gentleman, *&c.* which shews the very words got by heart which he was repeating. Otherwise *closes in the consequence,* which conveys no particular idea of the subject he was upon, could never have made him recollect where he broke off. This is an extraordinary instance of the poet's art, and attention to the preservation of character. WARBURTON.

This account of the character of Polonius, though it sufficiently reconciles the seeming inconsistency of so much wisdom with so much folly, does not perhaps correspond exactly to the ideas of our author. The commentator makes the character of Polonius, a character only of manners, discriminated by properties superficial, accidental, and acquired. The poet intended a nobler delineation of a mixed character of manners and of nature. Polonius is a man bred in courts, exercised in business, stored with observation, confident of his knowledge, proud of his eloquence,

eloquence, and declining into dotage. His mode of oratory is truly represented as designed to ridicule the practice of those times, of prefaces that made no introduction, and of method that embarrassed rather than explained. This part of his characters is accidental, the rest is natural. Such a man is positive and confident, because he knows that his mind was once strong, and knows not that it is become weak. Such a man excels in general principles, but fails in the particular application. He is knowing in retrospect, and ignorant in foresight. While he depends upon his memory, and can draw from his repositories of knowledge, he utters weighty sentences, and gives useful counsel; but as the mind in its enfeebled state cannot be kept long busy and intent, the old man is subject to sudden dereliction of his faculties, he loses the order of his ideas, and entangles himself in his own thoughts, till he recovers the leading principle, and falls again into his former train. This idea of dotage encroaching upon wisdom, will solve all the phænomena of the character of Polonius. JOHNSON.

219. —*to* expostulate] To *expostulate*, for *to inquire* or *discuss*. WARBURTON.

242. *To the celestial, and my soul's idol, the most* beautified *Ophelia*—] Heywood, in his *History of Edward VI.* says "*Katherine Parre*, queen dowager to king Henry VIII. was a woman *beautified* with many excellent virtues." FARMER.

246. *These in her excellent white bosom,*——] So, in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*:

"Even

"Even in *the milk-white bosom of thy love.*"

STEEVENS.

255. —*O most best*—] So, in *Acolastus*, a comedy, 1540: "—that same *most best* redresser, or reformer, is God." STEEVENS.

259. —*more above*,—] Is, *moreover, besides.*

JOHNSON.

271. *If I had play'd the desk, or table-book;*
Or given my heart a working, mute and dumb;
Or look'd upon this love with idle sight?
What might you think?—] *i. e.* If either I had conveyed intelligence between them, and been the confident of their amours [*play'd the desk or table-book*], or had connived at it, only observed them in secret, without acquainting my daughter with my discovery [*given my heart a mute and dumb working*]; or lastly, had been negligent in observing the intrigue, and overlooked it [*looked upon this love with idle sight*]; what would you have thought of me?

WARBURTON.

272. *Or given my heart* a working,—] The folio reads *a winking.* STEEVENS.

Or given my heart a working mute *and* dumb;—The same pleonasm is found in our author's *Rape of Lucrece*:

"And in my hearing be you *mute* and *dumb.*"

MALONE.

277. —precepts *gave her*,] Thus the folio. The two elder quartos read, *prescripts.* STEEVENS.

280.

280. *Which done,* she took *the fruits of my advice :*
And he, repulsed—] She took the *fruits* of advice when she obeyed advice, the advice was then made *fruitful.* JOHNSON.

281. —*(a short tale to make),*
Fell into a sadness; then into a fast, &c.]
The ridicule of this character is here admirably sustained. He would not only be thought to have discovered this intrigue by his own sagacity, but to have remarked all the stages of Hamlet's disorder, from his sadness to his raving, as regularly as his physician could have done: when all the while the madness was only feigned. The humour of this is exquisite from a man who tells us, with a confidence peculiar to small politicians, that he could find

Where truth was hid, though it were hid indeed
Within the centre. WARBURTON.

298. —four *hours together,*] Perhaps it would be better were we to read indefinitely,

——*for* hours together. TYRWHITT.

I should not hesitate to admit Mr. Tyrwhitt's conjecture into the text. The same mistake has I think happened in Webster's *Dutchess of Malfy,* 1623:

"She will muse *four* hours together; and her
silence
"Methinks expressed more than if she speak."
MALONE.

301. *At such a time I'll loose my daughter to him :*
Be you and I behind an arras then;
Mark the encounter : if he love her not,

And

And be not from his reason fallen thereon,
Let me be no assistant for a state,
But keep a farm, and carters.] The scheme of throwing Ophelia in Hamlet's way, in order to try his sanity, as well as the address of the king in a former scene to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern,

"I entreat you both——
"That you vouchsafe your rest here in our court
"Some little time; so by your companies
"*To draw him on to pleasures*, and to gather
"So much as from occasion you may glean,
"Whether aught to us unknown afflicts him thus,
"That open'd lies within our remedy."——

Seem to have been formed on some slight hints in *The Hystory of Hamblet*, bl. let. sig C 3. MALONE.

310. *I'll* board *him*——] That is, *accost* him. HENLEY.

322. *For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog,*
Being a god, *kissing carrion*——] As to the sense we may observe, that the illative particle [for] shews the speaker to be reasoning from something he had said before: what that was we learn in these words, *to be honest, as this world goes, is to be one picked out of ten thousand.* Having said this, the chain of ideas led him to reflect upon the argument which libertines bring against Providence from the circumstance of abounding *evil.* In the next speech therefore he endeavours to answer that objection, and vindicate Providence, even on a supposition of the fact,

fact, that almost all men were wicked. His argument in the two lines in question is to this purpose. *But why need we wonder at this abounding of evil? For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, which though a god, yet shedding its heat and influence upon carrion*——Here he stops short, lest talking too consequentially the hearer should suspect his madness to be feigned; and so turns him off from the subject, by inquiring of his daughter. But the inference which he intended to make, was a very noble one, and to this purpose. If this (says he) be the case, that the effect follows the things operated upon [*carrion*] and not the things operating [a *god*] why need we wonder, that the supreme cause of all things diffusing its blessings on mankind, who is, as it were, a dead carrion, dead in original sin, man instead of a proper return of duty, should breed only corruption and vices? This is the argument at length; and is as noble a one in behalf of Providence as could come from the schools of divinity. But this wonderful man had an art not only of acquainting the audience with what his actors *say*, but with what they *think*. The sentiment too is altogether in character, for Hamlet is perpetually moralizing, and his circumstances make this reflection very natural. The same *thought*, something diversified, as on a different occasion, he uses again in *Measure for Measure*, which will serve to confirm these observations:

The tempter or the tempted, who sins most?
Not she; nor doth she tempt; but it is I
That lying by the violet in the sun,

Do as the carrion does, not as the flower,
Corrupt by virtuous season.——

And the same kind of *expression* is in *Cymbeline*:

Common-kissing Titan. WARBURTON.

This is a noble emendation, which almost sets the critick on a level with the author. JOHNSON.

325. —*conception is a blessing*, &c.] Thus the folio. The quartos read thus:

——*conception* is a blessing;

But as your daughter may *conceive*, friend, look to't.

The meaning seems to be, *conception* (*i. e.* understanding) is a blessing; but as your daughter may *conceive* (*i. e.* be pregnant), *friend, look to't*, i. e. have a care of that. The same quibble occurs in the first scene of *K. Lear*:

"*Kent.* I cannot *conceive* you, sir.

"*Clo.* Sir, this young fellow's mother *could*."

STEEVENS.

350. *How* pregnant, &c.] *Pregnant* is ready, dexterous, apt. STEEVENS.

354. ——*and suddenly*, &c.] This, and the greatest part of the two following lines, are omitted in the quartos. STEEVENS.

361. *Rosencrantz*] There was an embassador of that name in England about the time when this play was written. STEEVENS.

382. ——*Let me*, &c.] All within the crotchets is wanting in the quartos. STEEVENS.

402. —*the shadow of a dream.*] Shakspere has accidently inverted an expression of Pindar, that the state of humanity is σκιας οναρ, the *dream* of a *shadow*. JOHNSON.

So

So Davies,

"Man's life is but a dreame, nay, less than so,
"*A shadow of a dreame.*" FARMER.

So, in the tragedy of *Darius*, 1603, by lord Sterline:

"Whose best was but the *shadow of a dream.*"
STEEVENS.

406. *Then are our beggars, bodies* ;—] Shakspere seems here to design a ridicule of these declamations against wealth and greatness, that seem to make happiness consist in poverty. JOHNSON.

437. *Nay, then I have an eye of you* ;—] An *eye of you* means, I have a glimpse of your meaning.
STEEVENS.

442. *I have of late*, &c.] This is an admirable description of a rooted melancholy sprung from thickness of blood; and artfully imagined to hide the true cause of his disorder from the penetration of these two friends, who were set over him as spies.
WARBURTON.

447. —*this brave over-hanging* firmament,——] Thus the quarto. The folio reads,—this brave o'erhanging, this, &c. STEEVENS.

463. —lenten *entertainment*——] *i. e.* sparing, like the entertainments given in *Lent*. So, in the *Duke's Mistress*, by Shirley, 1631:

"—to maintain you with bisket,
"Poor John, and half a livery, to read moral virtue
"And *lenten* lectures." STEEVENS.

464. ——*we* coted *them on the way*;—] To *cote* is *to overtake*. I meet with this word in *The Return from Parnassus*, a comedy, 1606:

"—marry we presently *coted* and outstript them."

I have observed the same verb to be used in several more of the old plays.

In the laws of coursing, says Mr. Tollet, "a *cote* is when a greyhound goes endways by the side of his fellow, and gives the hare a turn." This quotation seems to point out the etymology of the verb to be from the French *coté*, the side. STEEVENS.

469. —*shall end his part in peace*:——] After these words the folio adds, *the clown shall make those laugh whose lungs are tickled o' th' sere.*

WARBURTON.

The clown shall make those laugh whose lungs are tickled o' th' sere, i. e. those who are asthmatical, and to whom laughter is most uneasy. This is the case (as I am told) with those whose lungs are tickled by the *sere* or *serum*: but about this passage I am neither very confident, nor very solicitous.

The word *seare* occurs as unintelligibly in an ancient *Dialogue betweene the Comen Secretary and Jealowsy, touchynge the unstablenes of Harlottes*, bl. let. no date:

"And wyll byde whysperynge in the eare,
"Thynke ye her tayle is not light *of the seare*."

The *sere* is likewise a part about a hawk.

STEEVENS.

471.

471. —*the lady shall*, &c.] *The lady shall have no obstruction, unless from the lameness of the verse.*

JOHNSON.

I think the meaning is,—*the lady shall mar the measure of the verse, rather than not express herself freely or fully.*

HENDERSON.

478. *I think, their* inhibition—] I fancy this is transposed: Hamlet inquires not about an *inhibition*, but an *innovation*; the answer therefore probably was, *I think, their* innovation, *that is*, their new practice of strolling, *comes by means of the late* inhibition.

JOHNSON.

The drift of Hamlet's question appears to be this: —How chances it they travel?—i. e. *How happens it that they are become strollers?*—Their residence, both in reputation and profit, was better both ways.—i. e. *to have remained in a settled theatre, was the more honourable as well as the more lucrative situation.* To this, Rosencrantz replies—Their *inhibition* comes by means of the late *innovation*.—i. e. *their permission to act any longer at an established house is taken away, in consequence of the* NEW CUSTOM *of introducing personal abuse into their comedies.* Several companies of actors in the time of our author were silenced on account of this licentious practice. See a dialogue between *Comedy* and *Envy* at the conclusion of *Mucedorus*, 1598, as well as the preludium to *Aristippus, or the Jovial Philosopher*, 1630, from whence the following passage is taken: "*Shews* having been long intermitted and forbidden by authority, *for their abuses*, could not be raised but by conjuring."

conjuring." *Shew* enters, whipped by two furies, and the prologue says to her :

" —with tears wash off that guilty sin,
" Purge out those ill-digested dregs of wit,
" That use their ink to blot a spotless name:
" Let's have no one *particular man* traduc'd—
" ——spare the *persons*," &c.

Alteration in the order of the words seems to be quite unnecessary. STEEVENS.

There will still, however, remain some difficulty. The statute 39 Eliz. ch. 4. which seems to be alluded to by the words—*their inhibition*, was not made to inhibit the players from acting any longer at an *established theatre*, but to prohibit them from *strolling*. " All fencers (says the act), bearwards, *common players of interludes* and minstrels, *wandering abroad*, (other than players of enterludes, belonging to any baron of this realm or any other honourable personage of greater degree, to be authorized to play under the hand and seal of arms of such baron or personage) shall be taken, adjudged and deemed, rogues, vagabonds, and sturdy beggars, and shall sustain such pain and punishments as by this act is in that behalf appointed."

This circumstance is equally repugnant to Dr. Johnson's transposition of the text, and to Mr. Steevens's explanation of it as it now stands.

MALONE.

483. The lines enclosed in crotchets are in the folio

folio of 1623, but not in the quarto of 1637, nor, I suppose, in any of the quartos. JOHNSON.

485. —*an aiery of children,* &c.] This relates to the young singing men of St. Paul's, concerning whose performances and success in attracting the best company, I find the following passage in *Jack Drum's Entertainment, or Pasquil and Katherine,* 1601 :

" I saw the *children of Powles* last night;
" And troth they pleas'd me pretty, pretty well,
" The apes, in time, will do it handsomely.
" —I like the audience that frequenteth there
" With *much applause:* a man shall not be choak'd
" With stench of garlick, nor be pasted
" To the barmy jacket of a beer-brewer.
" 'Tis a good *gentle audience,*" &c.

It is said in Richard Flecknoe's *Short Discourse of the English Stage,* 1674, that, " both the children of the chappel and St. Paul's, acted playes, the one in White-Friers, the other behinde the Convocation-house in Paul's ; till people growing more precise, and playes more licentious, the theatre of Paul's was quite suppresst, and that of the children of the chappel converted to the use of the children of the revels." STEEVENS.

486. —*cry out on the top of question,*—] The meaning seems to be, they ask a common question in the higher notes of the voice. JOHNSON.

I believe *question,* in this place, as in many others, signifies

signifies *conversation, dialogue.* So, in *The Merchant of Venice:* " ——*Think* you *question* with a Jew." The meaning of the passage may therefore be—*Children that perpetually recite in the highest notes of voice that can be uttered.* STEEVENS.

492. —*escoted ?*——] Paid. From the French *escot*, a shot or reckoning. JOHNSON.

Will they pursue the quality *no longer than they can sing ?*] Will they follow the *profession* of players no longer than they keep the voices of boys, and sing in the choir ? So afterwards he says to the player, *Come, give us a taste of your* quality ; *come, a passionate speech.* JOHNSON.

So, in the players' *Dedication,* prefixed to the first edition of Fletcher's plays in folio, 1647: "—directed by the example of some who once steered in our *quality,* and so fortunately aspired to chuse your honour joined with your now glorified brother, patrons to the flowing compositions of the then expired sweet swan of Avon, Shakspere."

Again, in Gosson's *School of Abuse,* 1579: "I speak not of this as though every one [of the players] that professed the *qualitie,* so abused himself."—— MALONE.

495. —*most like,*—] The old copy reads,—*like most.* STEEVENS.

496. —*their writers do them wrong,* &c.] I should have been very much surprised if I had *not* found Ben Jonson among the writers here alluded to. STEEVENS.

499. —*to* tarre *them on to controversy*:——] To provoke any animal to rage, is *to tarre him.*

JOHNSON.

507. —*Hercules and his load too.*] *i. e.* They not only carry away the world, but the world-bearer too: alluding to the story of Hercules's relieving Atlas. This is humorous. WARBURTON.

The allusion may be to the *Globe* playhouse, on the Bankside, the signe of which was *Hercules carrying the Globe.* STEEVENS.

509. *It is not very strange: for mine uncle*—] I do not wonder that the new players have so suddenly risen to reputation, my uncle supplies another example of the facility with which honour is conferred upon new claimants. JOHNSON.

512. —*in little.*——] *i. e.* in miniature. So, in Massinger's *New Way to pay old Debts:*

"His father's picture *in little.*" STEEVENS.

513. *There is something*—] The old editions read, —'*sblood*, there is, &c. STEEVENS.

526. ——*when the wind is* southerly, *&c.*] So, in *Damon and Pythias*, 1582:

"But I perceive now, either the *winde is at the south*,

"Or else your tunge cleaveth to the rooffe of your mouth." STEEVENS.

527. —*I know a hawk from a* hand-saw.] This was a common proverbial speech. The Oxford Editor alters it to, *I know a hawk from an* hernshaw, as if the other had been a corruption of the players; whereas the

the poet found the proverb thus corrupted in the mouths of the people: so that the critick's alteration only serves to shew us the original of the expression.

WARBURTON.

Similarity of sound is the source of many literary corruptions. In Holborn we have still the sign of the *Bull and Gate*, which exhibits but an odd combination of images. It was originally (as I learn from the title page of an old play) the *Bullogne* Gate, *i. e.* one of the gates of *Bullogne*; designed perhaps as a compliment to Henry VIII. who took the place in 1544.

The *Bullogne mouth*, now the *Bull and Mouth*, had probably the same origin, *i. e.* the *mouth of the harbour of Bullogne*. STEEVENS.

540. *Buz, buz!*] *Buz, buz!* are interjections employed to interrupt Polonius. Ben Jonson uses them often for the same purpose, as well as Middleton in *A Mad World my Masters*, 1608. STEEVENS.

Buz used to be an interjection at Oxford, when any one began a story that was generally known before.

BLACKSTONE.

Buzzer, in a subsequent scene in this play, is used for a *busy talker*:

" ——And wants not *buzzers* to infect his ear
" With pestilent speeches."

It is therefore probable, from the answer of Polonius, that *buz* was used, as Dr. Johnson supposes, for an idle rumour without any foundation

In Ben Jonson's *Staple of News*, the collector of mercantile intelligence is called Emissary *Buz*.

MALONE.

542.

542. *Then came*, &c.] This seems to be a line of a ballad. JOHNSON.

545. —*tragical*, &c.] The words within the crotchets I have recovered from the folio, and see no reason why they were hitherto omitted. There are many plays of the age, if not of Shakspere, that answer to these descriptions. STEEVENS.

547. ——*Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light*:——] The tragedies of Seneca were translated into English by Thomas Newton and others, and published in 1581. One comedy of Plautus, *viz.* the *Menæchmi*, was likewise translated and published in 1565.

I believe the frequency of plays performed at public schools, suggested to Shakspere the names of *Seneca* and *Plautus* as dramatick authors. WARTON.

548. *For the law of* writ, *and the liberty, these are the only men.*] All the modern editions have, *the law of* wit, *and the liberty*; but both my old copies have, *the law of* writ, I believe rightly. *Writ*, for *writing*, *composition*. *Wit* was not, in our author's time, taken either for *imagination*, or *acuteness*, or *both together*, but for *understanding*, for the faculty by which we *apprehend* and *judge*. Those who wrote of the human mind, distinguished its primary powers into *wit* and *will*. Ascham distinguishes *boys* of active and of tardy faculties into *quick wits* and *slow wits*.

JOHNSON.

The old copies are certainly right. *Writ* is used for *writing* by authors contemporary with Shakspere. Thus,

Thus, in *The Apologie of Pierce Pennilesse*, by Thomas Nash, 1593: "For the lowsie circumstance of his poverty before his death, and sending that miserable *writte* to his wife, it cannot be but thou liest, learned Gabriel." Again, in bishop Earle's *Character of a mere dull Physician*, 1638: "Then followes a *writ* to his drugger, in a strange tongue, which he understands, though he cannot conster." MALONE.

561. Why, *as by lot, God wot,*—&c.] The old song from which these quotations are taken, I communicated to Dr. Percy, who has honoured it with a place in the second and third editions of his *Reliques of ancient English Poetry*. In the books belonging to the Stationers-Company, there is a late entry of this Ballad among others. "*Jeffa Judge of Israel,*" p. 93. Vol. III. Dec. 14. 1624. STEEVENS.

563. ——*the* pious chansons—] It is *pons chansons* in the first folio edition. The old ballads sung on bridges, and from thence called *Pons chansons*. Hamlet is here repeating ends of old songs. POPE.

It is *pons chansons* in the quarto too. I know not whence the *rubrick* has been brought, yet it has not the appearance of an arbitrary addition. The titles of old ballads were never printed red; but perhaps *rubrick* may stand for *marginal explanation*. JOHNSON.

There are five large vols. of ballads in Mr. Pepys's collection in Magdalen-College library, Cambridge, some as ancient as Henry VII.'s reign, and not one red letter upon any one of the titles. GREY.

The

The first row of the RUBRICK *will*, &c.] The words, *of the rubrick* were first inserted by Mr. Rowe, in his edition in 1709. The old quartos in 1604, 1605, and 1611, read *pious chanson*, which gives the sense wanted, and I have accordingly inserted it in the text.

The *pious chansons* were a kind of *Christmas carols*, containing some scriptural history thrown into loose rhimes, and sung about the streets by the common people when they went at that season to solicit alms. Hamlet is here repeating some scraps from a song of this kind, and when Polonius inquires what follows them, he refers him to the *first row* (*i. e.* division) of one of these, to obtain the information he wanted.

STEEVENS.

564. ——*my abridgment*—] He calls the players afterwards, *the brief chronicles of the times*; but I think he now means only *those who will shorten my talk*.

JOHNSON.

An *abridgment* is used for a dramatick piece in the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, act v. sc. 1.

"Say what *abridgment* have you for this evening?"

But it does not commodiously apply to this passage.

STEEVENS.

Does not *abridgment*, in *Midsummer Night's Dream*, signify *amusement to beguile the tediousness of the evening?* or, in one word, *pastime?*— HENLEY.

567. —*valanc'd*——] *Valanc'd* means over hung with a canopy or tester like a bed. The folios read *valiant* which seems right. The comedian was pro-

bably "bearded like a pard." REMARKS.

571. —*by the altitude of a* chioppine.] A *chioppine* is a high shoe worn by the Italians, as in Tho. Heywood's *Challenge of Beauty*, act v. STEEVENS.

573. —*be not crack'd within the ring.*] That is *crack'd too much for use.* This is said to a young player who acted the parts of women. JOHNSON.

I find the same phrase in *The Captain*, by Beaumont and Fletcher:

"Come to be married to my lady's woman,
"After she's *crack'd in the ring.*" STEEVENS.

574. ——*French falconers*——] The amusement of falconry was much cultivated in France. In *All's Well that Ends Well*, Shakspere has introduced an *astringer* or falconer at the French court. Mr. Tollet, who has mentioned the same circumstance, likewise adds, that it is said in *Sir Thomas Browne's Tracts*, p. 116, that "the *French* seem to have been the first and noblest falconers in the western part of Europe;" and, that "the *French* king sent over his falconers to shew that sport to king James the First."

See Weldon's *Court of King James.*

STEEVENS.

582. ——*caviare to the general:*——] Giles Fletcher in his *Russe Commonwealth*, 1591, p. 11, says, in Russia they have divers kinds of fish "very good and delicate: as the Bellouga or Bellougina of four or five elnes long, the Ositrina or Sturgeon, but not so thick nor long. These four kind of fish breed in the Wolgha and are catched in great plenty, and served thence into the whole realme for a good food.

Of

Of the roes of these four kinds they make very great store of Icary or *Caveary*." REED.

Ben Jonson has ridiculed the introduction of these foreign delicacies in his *Cinthia's Revels*—" He doth learn to eat Anchovies, Macaroni, Bovoli, Fagioli, and *Caviare*," &c.

Mr. Malone observes, that lord Clarendon uses *the general* for *the people*, in the same manner. And so by undervaluing many particulars (which they truly esteemed) as rather to be consented to than that *the general* should suffer." B. V. p. 530. STEEVENS.

584. —*cried in the top of mine*—] *i. e.* whose judgment I had the highest opinion of.

WARBURTON.

I think it means only that *were higher than mine*.

JOHNSON.

Whose judgment, in such matters, was in much higher vogue than mine. REVISAL.

Perhaps it means only—whose judgment was more clamorously delivered than mine. We still say of a bawling actor, that he speaks *on the top of his voice*.

STEEVENS.

To *over-top* is a hunting term applied to a dog when he gives more tongue than the rest of the cry. To this I believe Hamlet refers, and he afterwards mentions a CRY *of players*. HENLEY.

585. —*set down with as much* modesty——] *Modesty*, for *simplicity*. WARBURTON.

586. —*there were no* sallets, *&c.*] Such is the reading of the old copies. I know not why the later editors

tors continued to adopt the alteration of Mr. Pope, and read, no *salt*, &c.

Mr. Pope's alteration may indeed be in some degree supported by the following passage in Decker's *Satiromastix*: "—a prepar'd troop of gallants, who shall distaste every *unsalted* line in their fly-blown comedies." Though the other phrase was used as late as in the year 1665, in a *Banquet of Jests*, &c. "—for junkets, joci; and for curious *sallets*, sales."

STEEVENS.

It was a remark attributed to Mrs. Warburton on the conversation of her bishop and bishop Hurd:— "that the oil of the latter with the vinegar of the former, made an exquisite *sallad*." * * *.

588. —*that might* indite *the author*—] *Indite*, for *convict*.

WARBURTON.

—*indite* the author of *affection*:] *i. e.* convict the author of being a fantastical *affected* writer.

STEEVENS.

589. —*but call'd it, an honest method*;—] Hamlet is telling how much his judgment differed from that of others. *One said, there was no salt in the linen*, &c. *but called it an honest method*. The author probably gave it, *But I called it an honest method*, &c.

JOHNSON.

590. —*wholesome*, &c.] This passage was recovered from the quartos by Dr. Johnson.

STEEVENS.

596. *The rugged Pyrrhus*, &c.] Mr. Malone once observed to me, that a *late editor* supposed the speech uttered

uttered by the *Player* before *Hamlet*, to have been taken from an ancient drama, entitled "Dido Queen of Carthage." I had not then the means of justifying or confuting his remark the piece alluded to having escaped the hands of the most liberal and industrious collectors of such curiosities. Since, however, I have met with this performance, and am therefore at liberty to pronounce that it did not furnish our author with more than a general hint for his description of the death of Priam, &c. unless with reference to

——The whiff and *wind* of his fell sword
The unnerved father falls,——

We read, ver. 23:

And with the *wind* thereof the king fell down:
And can make out a resemblance between
So as a painted tyrant, Pyrrhus stood;

And ver. 32.

So leaning on his sword, he stood stone still.

The greater part of the following lines are surely more ridiculous in themselves, than even Shakspere's happiest vein of burlesque or parody could have made them:

"At last came *Pirrhus* fell and full of ire,
"His harnesse dropping bloud, and on his speare
"The mangled head of *Priams* yongest sonne,
"And after him his band of Mirmidons,
"With balles of wild fire in their murdering pawes,

" Which made the funerall flame that burnt faire
Troy:
" All which hemd me about, crying, this is he.
" *Dido.* Ah, how could poor Æneas scape their hands?
" *Æn.* My mother *Venus* jealous of my health,
" Convaid me from their crooked nets and bands:
" So I escapt the furious *Pirrhus* wrath:
" Who then ran to the pallace of the King,
" And at *Jove's* Altar finding *Priamus,*
" About whose wither'd necke hung Hecuba,
" Foulding his hand in hers, and joyntly both
" Beating their breasts and falling on the ground.
" He with his faulchions point raisde up at once;
" And with *Megeras* eyes stared in their face,
" Threatning a thousand deaths at every glaunce.
" To whom the aged king thus trembling spoke:
&c.—
" Not mov'd at all, but smiling at his teares,
" This butcher, whilst his hands were yet held up,
" Treading upon his breast, strooke off his hands.
" *Dido.* O end, Æneas, I can heare no more.
" *Æn.* At which the frantick queene leapt on his face.
" And in his eyelids hanging by the nayles,
" A little while prolong'd her husband's life:
" At last the souldiers puld her by the heeles,
" And swong her howling in the emptie ayre,
" Which sent an echo to the wounded king:

" Whereat

" Whereat he lifted up his bedred lims,
" And would have grappeld with Achilles sonne,
" Forgetting both his want of strength and hands;
" Which he disdaining, whiskt his sword about,
" And with the wound thereof the king fell downe;
" Then from the navell to the throat at once,
" He ript old Priam; at whose latter gaspe
" Jove's marble statue gan to bend the brow,
" As lothing Pirrhus for this wicked act:
" Yet he undaunted tooke his fathers flagge,
" And dipt it in the old kings chill cold bloud,
" And then in triumph ran into the streetes,
" Through which he could not passe for slaughtred men:
" So leaning on his sword he stood stone still,
" Viewing the fire wherewith rich Ilion burnt."

Act II.

The exact title of the Play from which these lines are copied, is as follows: The | Tragedie of Dido | *Queen of Carthage* | Played by the Children of her | *Majesties Chappel.* | Written by Christopher Marlowe, and | *Thomas Nash, Gent.* | —Actors | *Jupiter.* | *Ganimed.* | *Venus.* | *Cupid.* | *Juno.* | *Mercurie, or* | *Hermes.* | *Æneas.* | *Ascanius.* | *Dido.* | *Anna.* | *Achates.* | *Ilioneus.* | *Iarbas.* | *Cloanthes.* | *Sergestus.* | At London, | Printed, by the Widdowe *Orwin*, for *Thomas Woodcocke*, and | are to be sold at his shop, in Paules Church-yeard, at | the signe of the Blacke Beare. 1594. |

STEEVENS.

603.

603. *Now is he total* gules ;—] *Gules* is a term in the barbarous jargon peculiar to heraldry, and signifies *red*. Shakspere has it again in *Timon* :

"With man's blood paint the ground ; *gules*, *gules*."

Heywood, in his Second Part of the *Iron Age*, has made a verb from it :

"—old Hecuba's reverend locks

"Be *gul'd* in slaughter."— STEEVENS.

609. With *eyes* like *carbuncles*——] So, Milton's Paradise Lost, B. IX. l. 500.

"——and *carbuncles* his *eyes*." STEEVENS.

See also, *The History of the Caliph Vathek*, p. 307.

* * *.

647. —*the* mobled *queen*—] *Mobled* or *mabled* signifies *veiled*. So Sandys, in his Travels, speaking of the Turkish women, says, *their heads and faces are* mabled *in fine linen, that no more is to be seen of them than their eyes.* WARBURTON.

Mobled, signifies *huddled, grossly covered.*

JOHNSON.

I meet with this word in Shirley's *Gentleman of Venice*.

"The moon does *mobble* up herself." FARMER.

But who, a woe! *had seen*, &c.] The folio reads, I believe, rightly :

But who, *O who*, had seen, &c. MALONE.

651. *With* bisson *rheum* ;—] *Bisson* or *beesen*, *i. e.* blind. A word still in use in some parts of the north of England.

So, in *Coriolanus*: "What harm can your *bisson* conspectuities glean out of this character?"

STEEVENS.

662. —*made* milch—] Drayton in the 13th Song of his *Polyolbion* gives this epithet to dew:

"Exhaling the *milch* dew," &c. STEEVENS.

696. *Is it not monstrous, that this player here,*] It should seem from the complicated nature of such parts as Hamlet, Lear, &c. that the time of Shakspere had produced many excellent performers. He would scarce have taken the pains to form the characters which he had no prospect of seeing represented with force and propriety on the stage. STEEVENS.

700. *Tears in his eyes, distraction in's* aspect.] The word *aspect* (as Dr. Farmer very properly observes) was in Shakspere's time accented on the second syllable. The folio exhibits the passage as I have printed it. STEEVENS.

704. *What's Hecuba to him,* &c.] 'Tis plain Shakspere alludes to a story told of Alexander the cruel tyrant of Pheræ in Thessaly, who seeing a famous tragedian act the Troades of Euripides was so sensibly touched that he left the theatre before the play was ended; being ashamed, as he owned, that he who never pitied those he murdered should weep at the sufferings of *Hecuba* and Andromache. See Plutarch in the life of Pelopidas. UPTON.

706. —*the* cue *for passion,*] The *hint*, the *direction*. JOHNSON.

708. —*the general ear*—] The ear of all mankind. So before, *Caviare* to the *general*, that is, to the *multitude*. JOHNSON.

714. ——unpregnant *of my cause*,] *Not quickened with a new desire of vengeance; not teeming with revenge.* JOHNSON.

717. *A damn'd* defeat *was made*.—] *Defeat*, for *destruction*. WARBURTON.

Rather, *dispossession*. JOHNSON.

The word *defeat* is very licentiously used by the old writers. Shakspere in another play employs it yet more quaintly.—" *Defeat* my favour with an usurped beard." STEEVENS.

727. —*kindless*—] *Unnatural*. JOHNSON.

728. *Why, what an ass am I? This is most brave*;] The folio reads,

" O vengeance!

" Who? what an ass am I? Sure this is most brave." STEEVENS.

733. *A* scullion!] Thus the folio. The quarto reads, a *stallion*. STEEVENS.

735. *About my brains!*——] *Wits, to your work. Brain*, go *about* the present business. JOHNSON.

This expression occurs in the Second Part of the *Iron Age*, by *Heywood*, 1632:

" *My brain about* again! for thou hast found

" New projects now to work on." STEEVENS.

736. ————*I've heard,*

That guilty creatures, sitting at a play,] A number

number of these stories are collected together by Thomas Heywood, in his *Actor's Vindication*.

STEEVENS.

744. —*tent him*—] Search his wounds. JOHNSON.

—*if he do* blench,] If he *shrink* or *start*.

STEEVENS.

751. *More* relative *than this*;—] *Relative*, for *convictive*. WARBURTON.

Convictive is only the consequential sense. *Relative*, is *nearly related, closely connected*. JOHNSON.

ACT III.

Line 1. —CONFERENCE] The folio reads, *circumstance*. STEEVENS.

19. —o'er-raught *on the way* :—] *Over-raught* is *over-reached*, that is, *over-took*. JOHNSON.

35. Affront *Ophelia*.] To *affront*, is only *to meet directly*. JOHNSON.

Affrontare, Ital. So, in the *Devil's Charter*, 1607:

"*Affronting* that port where proud Charles should enter."

Again, in Sir W. D'Avenant's *Cruel Brother*, 1630:

"In sufferance *affronts* the winter's rage."

STEEVENS.

36. ——*espiels*] *i. e.* spies.

The words—*lawful espiels*, are wanting in the quartos. STEEVENS.

52. *Your* loneliness.——] Thus the folio. The first and second quartos read *lowliness*. STEEVENS.

53. *'Tis too much prov'd*,—] It is found by too frequent experience. JOHNSON.

59. —*more ugly to the thing that* helps *it*,] That is, *compared with* the thing that helps it. JOHNSON.

63. *To be, or not to be*,—] Of this celebrated soliloquy, which bursting from a man distracted with contrariety of desires, and overwhelmed with the magnitude of his own purposes, is connected rather in the speaker's mind, than on his tongue, I shall endeavour to discover the train, and to shew how one sentiment produces another.

Hamlet knowing himself injured in the most enormous and atrocious degree, and seeing no means of redress, but such as must expose him to the extremity of hazard, meditates on his situation in this manner: *Before I can form any rational scheme of action under this pressure of distress*, it is necessary to decide, whether, *after our present state, we are* to be, or not to be. That is the question, which, as it shall be answered, shall determine, *whether 'tis nobler*, and more suitable to the dignity of reason, *to suffer the outrages of fortune* patiently, or to take arms against *them*, and by opposing end them, *though perhaps* with the loss of life. If *to die*, were *to sleep*, *no more*, *and by a sleep to end* the miseries of our nature, such a sleep were *devoutly to*

be wished; but if *to sleep* in death, be *to dream*, to retain our powers of sensibility, we must *pause* to consider, *in that sleep of death what dreams may come*. This consideration *makes calamity* so long endured; *for who would bear* the vexations of life, which might be ended *by a bare bodkin*, but that he is afraid of something in unknown futurity? This fear it is that gives efficacy to conscience, which by turning the mind upon *this regard*, chills the ardour of *resolution*, checks the vigour of *enterprize*, and makes the *current* of desire stagnate in inactivity.

We may suppose that he would have applied these general observations to his own case, but that he discovered Ophelia. JOHNSON.

I cannot but think that Dr. Johnson's explication of this passage, though excellent on the whole, is wrong in the outset.—He explains the words—*To be, or not to be*—" Whether after our present state, we are to be, or not;" whereas the obvious sense of them—*To live, or to put an end to my life*, seems clearly to be pointed out by the following words, which are manifestly a paraphrase on the foregoing—*Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer*, &c. *or to take arms*—The train of Hamlet's reasoning, which Dr. Johnson has so well explained, is sufficiently clear, which ever way the words are understood. MALONE.

This interpretation of Mr. Malone is indisputably right, as the very notion of a *ghost*, implies the certainty of an after-existence. HENLEY.

66. *Or to take arms against a* sea *of troubles,*] Shakspere resembles Æschylus in the sudden breaks of his metaphors. To take up arms against a *sea* of troubles, is in the manner of our author. Were we to admit *siege* for *sea*, we might improve the picture; but we should endanger the likeness. Iö says, in the Prometheus vinctus of Æschylus, v. 885.

"My confused words strike at random against a *sea of troubles*, or the waves of misery;" by which she means,——I talk confusedly in my misfortunes.

S. W.

67. ——*To die*;—*to sleep*;—] This passage is ridiculed in the *Scornful Lady* of Beaumont and Fletcher, as follows:

"——be deceas'd, that is, asleep, for so the word is taken. "*To sleep, to die*; *to die, to sleep*; a very figure, sir." &c. &c. STEEVENS.

74. —*mortal* coil,] *i. e.* turmoil, bustle.

WARBURTON.

77. —*the* whips *and* scorns *of time,*] *Whips* and *scorns* are as inseparable companions, as publick punishment and infamy.

Hamlet is introduced as reasoning on a question of general concernment. He therefore takes in all such evils as could befall mankind in general, without considering himself at present as a prince, or wishing to avail himself of the few exemptions which high place might once have claimed.

In part of K. James I.'s *Entertainment passing to his*

his Coronation, by Ben Jonson and Decker, is the following line, and note on that line:

" *And first account of years, of months,* OF TIME."

" By *time* we understand *the present.*"

STEEVENS.

The word *whips* is used by Marston in his *Satires*, 1599, in the sense required here:

" Ingenuous melancholy——
" Inthrone thee in my blood; let me entreat,
" Stay his quick jocund skips and force him run
" A sad pac'd course, untill my *whips* be done."

MALONE.

78. ——*the* proud *man's contumely*,] The folio reads:

——the *poor* man's contumely,

which may be right;—*the contumely which the poor man is obliged to endure:*

" Nil habet infelix paupertas durius in se,
" Quam quod ridiculos homines facit."

MALONE.

79. —*of* despis'd *love*,] The folio reads—Of *dispriz'd* love. STEEVENS.

82. ——*might his* quietus *make*
With a bare bodkin?—] The first expression probably alluded to the writ of discharge, which was formerly granted to those barons and knights who personally attended the king on any foreign expedition. This discharge was called a *quietus*.

It is at this time the term for the acquittance which

every sheriff receives on settling his accounts at the exchequer.

The word is used for the discharge of an account, by Webster.

A *bodkin* was the ancient term for a *small dagger.*

So, in the Second Part of the *Mirrour of Knighthood*, 4to. bl. let. 1598:——" Not having any more weapons but a poor poynado, which usually he did weare about him, and taking it in his hand, delivered these speeches unto it: Thou silly *bodkin* shalt finish the piece of worke," &c.

In the margin of *Stowe's Chronicle*, 1614, it is said, that Cæsar was slain with *bodkins.*

Again, in *Chaucer*, as he is quoted at the end of a pamphlet called the *Serpent of Division*, &c. *whereunto is annexed the Tragedy of Gorboduc*, &c. 1591:

" With *bodkins* was Cæsar Julius
" Murdered at Rome, of Brutus Crassus."

STEEVENS.

84. *To* groan *and sweat*—] All the old copies have, *to* grunt *and sweat.* It is undoubtedly the true reading, but can scarcely be borne by modern ears.

JOHNSON.

The change made by the editors, is however supported by the following line in *Julius Cæsar*, act iv. sc. 1.

" To *groan* and sweat under the businesse."

This word occurs in the *Death of Zoroas*, by Nicholas Grimoald, a fragment in blank verse, printed at the end of *Lord Surrey's poems*:

" —none

"———none the charge could give;
"Here *grunts*; here grones; echwhere strong
youth is spent."

And Stanyhurst in his translation of Virgil, 1582, for supremum *congemuit*, gives us: "—for sighing it *grunts*." STEEVENS.

86. *The* undiscover'd *country, from whose bourn*
No traveller *returns*—] This has been cavilled at by Lord Orrery and others, but without reason. The idea of a *traveller* in Shakspere's time, was of a person who gave an account of his adventures. Every voyage was a *Discovery*. John Taylor has "*A Discovery* by sea from London to Salisbury." FARMER.

This passage has been objected to by others on a ground which seems more plausible. Hamlet himself has just had ocular demonstration that travellers *do* sometimes return from this strange country. Shakspere, however, appears to have seldom compared the different parts of his plays, and contented himself with general truths. It would have been easy to have written—*Few* travellers return.

Marlowe had, before our author, compared death to a journey to an *undiscovered country*.

Again, Marston's *Insatiate Countess*, 1603:

"———wrestled with death,
"From whose stern cave none tracks a backward
path."

Qui nunc it per iter tenebricosum,
Illuc unde negant redire quenquam. *Catullus.*

STEEVENS.

Mr. Steevens's charge of inconsistency in Shakspere, is in the present instance unfounded.

" From whose *bourn*
" No traveller returns——"

May be understood to mean, not from the *hithermost*, but, the *remotest*, *confines* of which *country*. This expectation suits best, at least, with the idea of a traveller on a journey of *discovery*. But taking it otherwise, the *apparition of a ghost* can with no propriety be styled the *return of a traveller*; especially, of *this* ghost, who is so far from making any discovery of this unknown country, that he was even interdicted from mentioning the lightest word of the secrets of his prison-house in it. HENLEY.

94. —*turn* awry,] Thus the quartos. The folio —turn *away*. STEEVENS.

96. —*Nymph, in thy orisons*, &c.] This is a touch of nature. Hamlet, at the sight of Ophelia, does not immediately recollect that he is to personate madness, but makes her an address grave and solemn, such as the foregoing meditation excited in his thoughts.

JOHNSON.

107. *And, with them, words of so sweet breath compos'd*
As made the things more rich: their perfume *lost,*
Take these again;—] The same metaphor is used, but in a different connexion, by Drayton:

" Shepheard why creepe we in this lowly vaine,
" As though our muse no store at all affordes,
" Whilst

" Whilst others vaunt it with the frolicke trayne,
" And strut the stage with *reperfumed* wordes."

HENLEY.

122. ——*than the force of honesty can translate beauty into* its *likeness*:] All the old copies have *his* likeness. There is no need of change. Our author frequently uses *his* for *its*. MALONE.

127. —*inoculate*——] This is the reading of the first folio. The first quarto reads *euocutat*; the second, *euacuat*; and the third, *evacuate*. STEEVENS.

135. —*at my beck*,—] That is, *always ready to come about me*.

With more offences at my beck, than I have thoughts to put them in, *imagination to give them shape, or time to act them in.*

To put a thing into thought, is *to think on it.*

JOHNSON.

153. *I have heard of your* paintings *too, well enough*, &c.] This is according to the quarto, the folio, for *painting*, has *prattlings*, and for *face*, has *pace*.

STEEVENS.

156. —*make your wantonness your ignorance*:——] You mistake by *wanton* affectation, and pretend to mistake by *ignorance*. JOHNSON.

163. *The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's eye, tongue, sword*;] The poet certainly meant to have placed his words thus:

The courtier's, scholar's, soldier's eye, tongue, sword;

otherwise

otherwise the excellence of *tongue* is appropriated to the *soldier*, and the *scholar* wears the *sword*.

WARNER.

This regulation is needless. So, in *Tarquin* and *Lucrece*:

"Princes are the *glass*, the *school*, the *book*,
"Where subject eyes do *learn*, do *read*, do *look*."

And in *Quintilian*: "Multum agit sexus, ætas, conditio; ut in *fœminis*, *senibus*, *pupillis*, *liberos parentes*, *conjuges*, alligantibus." FARMER.

165. —*the mould of form*,] The model by whom all endeavoured to form themselves. JOHNSON.

167. —*most* deject——] So, in Heywood's *Silver Age*, 1613:

"What knight is that
"So passionately *deject*?" STEEVENS.

170. —*out of* tune——] Thus the folio. The quarto —out of *time*. STEEVENS.

171. —*and* feature——] Thus the folio. The quartos read *stature*. STEEVENS.

172. —*with* ecstasy:——] The word *ecstasy* was anciently used to signify some degree of alienation of the mind.

So, G. Douglas, translating—*stetit acri fixa dolore*:

"In *ecstasy* she stood, and mad almaist."

STEEVENS.

194. —*be* round *with him*;] To be round *with* a person, is to reprimand him with freedom. So, in *A Mad World, my Masters*, by Middleton, 1640: "She's *round* with her i'faith."

MALONE.

211. ——perriwig-*pated*——] This is a ridicule on the quantity of false hair worn in Shakspere's time, for wigs were not in common use till the reign of Charles II. In the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *Julia* says—"I'll get me such a colour'd *perriwig*."

Players, however, seem to have worn them most generally. So, in *Every Woman in her Humour*, 1609: "—as none wear hoods but monks and ladies; and feathers but fore-horses, &c.—none *perriwigs* but *players* and pictures." STEEVENS.

212. —*the groundlings*;—] The meaner people then seem to have sat below, as they now sit in the upper gallery, who, not well understanding poetical language, were sometimes gratified by a mimical and mute representation of the drama, previous to the dialogue. JOHNSON.

Before each act of the tragedy of *Jocasta*, translated from *Euripides*, by Geo. Gascoigne and Fra. Kinwelmersh, the order of these dumb shews is very minutely described. This play was presented at Gray's-Inn by them, in 1566. The mute exhibitions included in it are chiefly emblematical, nor do they display a picture of one single scene which is afterwards performed on the stage. In some other pieces I have observed, that they serve to introduce such circumstances as the limits of a play would not admit to be represented.

Thus in *Herod and Antipater*, 1622:

"——*Let me now*

"*Intreat your worthy patience to contain*

"*Much in imagination; and, what words*

"*Cannot*

" *Cannot have time to utter, let your eyes,*
" *Out of this* DUMB SHOW, *tell your memories.*"

In short, dumb shews sometimes supplied deficiencies, and, at others, filled up the space of time which was necessary to pass while business was supposed to be transacted in foreign parts. With this method of preserving one of the unities, our ancestors appear to have been satisfied. Ben Jonson mentions the *groundlings* with equal contempt. " The understanding gentlemen of the *ground* here."

213. —*who, for the most part, are* capable *of nothing but inexplicable dumb shews, and noise:*——] *i. e.* have a *capacity* for nothing but dumb shews; *undertsand* nothing else. So, in Heywood's *History of Women*, 1624: " I have therein imitated our *historical* and comical poets, that write to the stage; who, lest the auditory should be dulled with serious discourses, in every act present some Zany, with his mimick gesture, to breed in the less *capable* mirth and laughter."

MALONE.

214. —*inexplicable dumb shews,*] I believe the meaning is, *shews without words to explain them.* JOHNSON.

Rather, I believe, shews which are too confusedly conducted to explain themselves.

I meet with one of these in Heywood's play of the *Four Prentices of London*, 1632, where the *Presenter* says,

" I must entreat your patience to forbear
" While we do feast your eye and starve your ear.

" For

" For in *dumb shews*, which were they writ at large
" Would ask a long and tedious circumstance,
" Their infant fortunes I will soon express," &c.

Then follow the *dumb shews*, which well deserve the character Hamlet has already given of this species of entertainment, as may be seen from the following passage: " Enter Tancred, with Bella Franca richly attired, she *somewhat affecteth him*, though she *makes no show of it*." Surely this may be called " an *inexplicable dumb shew*." STEEVENS.

215. —*Termagant*;—] *Termagant* is mentioned by Spenser in his *Faery Queene*, and by Chaucer in *The Tale of Sir Topas*; and by Beaumont and Fletcher in *King or no King*, as follows:

" This would make a saint swear like a soldier, and a soldier like *Termagant*."

216. —*out-herods Herod*:—] The character of *Herod* in the ancient mysteries was always a violent one:

See the *Conventriæ Ludus* among the Cotton MSS. Vespasian D. VIII.

" Now I regne lyk a kyng arayd ful rych,
" Rollyd in rynggs and robys of array,
" Dukys with dentys I dryve into the dych;
" My dedys be ful dowty demyd be day."

Again, in the *Chester Whitsun Plays*, MSS. Harl. 1013:

" I kynge of kynges non so keene,
" I sovraigne sir as well is seene,
" I yrant that maye bouth take and teene
" Castell, tower and towne.

" I welde

" I welde this worlde withouten were
" I beate all those unbuxome beene;
" I drive the devills alby dene
" Deepe in hell a downe.

" For I am kinge of all mankinde,
" I byd, I beate, I lose, I bynde,
" I master the moone, take this in mynde
" That I am most of mighte.

" I am the greatest above degree
" That is, that was, or ever shall be;
" The sonne it dare not shine on me,
" And I byd him goe downe.

" No raine to fall shall now be free,
" Nor no lorde have that liberty
" That dare abyde and I byd fleey,
" But I shall crake his crowne."

See the *Vintner's Play*, p. 67.

Chaucer also, describing a parish clerk, in his *Miller's Tale*, says,

" He playith *Herode* on a skaffold high."

The parish clerks and other subordinate ecclesiasticks appear to have been our first actors, and to have represented their characters on distinct pulpits or *scaffolds*. Thus, in one of the stage-directions to the 27th pageant in the Coventry collection already mentioned; " What tyme that processyon is entered into yt place, and the Herowdys takyn his *schaffalde*, and Annas and Cayphas their *schaffaldys*," &c.

STEEVENS.

226.

226. —age *and body of the* time,—] To exhibit the *form and pressure* of the *age* of the *time*, is, to represent the manners of the time suitable to the period that is treated of, according as it may be ancient, or modern. STEEVENS.

227. —*pressure*—] Resemblance, as in a *print*. JOHNSON.

229. ——*the censure of which one, must, in your allowance, overweigh a whole theatre of others.*] Ben Jonson seems to have imitated this passage in his *Poetaster*, 1601:

" ——I will try
" If tragedy have a more kind aspect;
" Her favours in my text I will pursue;
" Where if I prove the *pleasure but of one,*
" *If he judicious be, he shall be alone*
" *A theatre unto me.*" MALONE.

231. —*O, there be players,*—] I would read thus: " There be players, that I have seen play, and heard others praise, and that highly (not to speak profanely), that neither having the accent nor the gait of Christian, Pagan, nor *Mussulman*, have so strutted and bellowed, that I thought some of nature's journeymen had made *the men*, and not made them well," &c. FARMER.

I have no doubt that our author wrote—" that I thought some of nature's journeymen had made *them*, and not made them well," &c. *Them* and *men* are frequently confounded in the old copies. See the *Comedy of Errors*, act ii. folio, 1623: " because it

is a blessing that he bestows upon beasts, and what he hath scanted *them* [r. *men*] in hair, he hath given them in wit."—In the present instance the compositor probably caught the word *men* from the last syllable of *journey*men. Shakspere could not mean to assert as a general truth, that nature's journeymen had made *men*, i. e. all mankind: for, if that were the case, the strutting players would have been on a footing with the rest of the species.

A passage in *King Lear*, in which we meet with the same sentiment, in my opinion, fully supports the emendation now proposed:

"*Kent.* *Nature* disclaims in THEE, a *tailor made* THEE.

"*Corn.* A tailor make a man!

"*Kent.* Ay, a tailor, sir; a stone-cutter or a painter [*Nature's journeymen*] could not have made *him* so ill, though he had been but two hours at the trade."

MALONE.

233. —*not to speak it* profanely—] *Profanely* seems to relate, not to the praise which he has mentioned, but to the censure which he is about to utter. Any gross or indelicate language was called *profane*.

JOHNSON.

242. —*speak no more than is set down for them*:] So, in *The Antipodes*, by Brome, 1638:

"—you, sir, are incorrigible, and
"Take licence to yourself to add unto
"Your parts, your own free fancy," &c.

—"That

" —That is a way, my lord, has been allow'd
" On elder stages, to move mirth and laughter."
" —Yes, in the days of *Tarlton*, and of *Kempe*,
" Before the stage was purg'd from barbarism,"
&c.

Stowe informs us, (p. 697, edit. 1615), that among the twelve players who were sworn the queen's servants in 1583, " were two rare men, viz. Thomas Wilson, for a quicke delicate refined *extemporall witte*; and Richard Tarleton, for a wondrous plentifull, pleasant *extemporall witt*," &c.

Again, in *Tarlton's Newes from Purgatory*: " —I absented myself from all plaies, as wanting that merrye Roscius of plaiers that famosed all comedies so with his pleasant and *extemporall invention*."

STEEVENS.

266. —*the pregnant hinges of the knee.*] I believe the sense of *pregnant* in this place is, *quick*, *ready*, *prompt*. JOHNSON.

269. *And could of men distinguish her election*
Hath seal'd thee for herself:] Thus the folio. The quarto thus:

And could of men distinguish her election,
Sh' hath seal'd thee, &c. STEEVENS.

To distinguish her election, is no more than to *make her election*. *Distinguish of men*, is exceeding harsh, to say the best of it. REMARKS.

274. *Whose blood and judgment*—] According to the doctrine of the four humours, *desire* and *confidence* were seated in the blood, and *judgment* in the phlegm,

and the due mixture of the humours made a perfect character. JOHNSON.

289. —*Vulcan's* stithy :—] *Stithy* is a Smith's *anvil.* JOHNSON.

302. —*nor mine now.*——] A man's words, says the proverb, are his own no longer than he keeps them unspoken. JOHNSON.

—*you play'd once* i' the university, *you say?*] It should seem from the following passage in vice-chancellor Hatcher's letter to Lord Burghley Ch. June 21, 1580, that the common players were likewise occasionally admitted to perform there. "—Whereas it hath pleased your honour to recommend my lord of Oxenford his players, that they might show their cunning in several plays already practised by 'em before the Queen's majesty"——(denied on account of the pestilence and commencement) "of late we denied the like to the Right Honourable the Lord of Leicester his servants." FARMER.

318. —*at Ophelia's feet.*] To lie at the feet of a mistress during any dramatick representation, seems to have been a common act of gallantry. So, in the *Queen of Corinth*, by Beaumont and Fletcher :

"Ushers her to her coach, *lies at her feet*

"*At solemn masques*, applauding what she laughs at."

Again, in Gascoigne's *Green Knight's farewell to Fancie* :

"To *lie along in ladies lappes*," &c.

This

This fashion which Shakspere probably designed to ridicule by appropriating it to Hamlet during his dissembled madness, is likewise exposed by Decker, in his *Gul's Hornbook*, 1609.

See an extract from it among the prefaces.

STEEVENS.

319. *I mean*, &c.] This speech and *Ophelia*'s reply to it are omitted in the quartos. STEEVENS.

328. —*your only* jig-maker.——] There may have been some humour in this passage, the force of which is now diminished :

" ——many gentlemen
" Are not, as in the days of understanding,
" Now satisfied without a *jig*, which since
" They cannot, with their honour, call for after
" The play, they look to be serv'd up in the middle."

Changes, or Love in a Maze, by Shirley, 1632.

In the *Hog has lost his Pearl*, 1614, one of the players comes to solicit a gentleman to *write* a *jig* for him. A *jig* was not in Shakspere's time a dance, but a ludicrous dialogue in metre, and of the lowest kind, like *Hamlet*'s conversation with *Ophelia*. Many of these jigs are entered in the books of the Stationers-Company :—" Philips his *Jigg* of the slyppers, 1595. Kempe's *Jigg* of the Kitchen-stuff-woman, 1595."

STEEVENS.

The following lines in the prologue to Fletcher's *Love's Pilgrimage* confirm Mr. Steevens's remark :

" ——for approbation,
" A *jig* shall be clap'd at, and ev'ry *rhyme*
" Prais'd and applauded by a clamorous chime."

A *jig* was not always in the form of a dialogue. Many historical ballads were formerly called *jigs*.

MALONE.

333. —*Nay, then let the devil wear black, for I'll have a suit of sables.*—] Here again is an equivoque. In Massinger's *Old Law*, we have,

" ——A cunning grief,
" That's only fac'd with *sables* for a show,
" But gawdy-hearted."— FARMER.

That a *suit of sables* was the magnificent dress of our author's time, appears from a passage in Ben Jonson's *Discoveries*: " Would you not laugh to meet *a great counsellor of state*, in a flat cap, with his trunk-hose, and a hobby-horse cloak, and yond haberdasher in a velvet gown trimmed with *sables?*" MALONE.

" I had rather (says honest Sancho, when he was taking leave of his government) cover myselfe with a double sheepe skinne—than be cloathed in *sables*." Shelton, P. II. p. 359. Edit. 1620. REMARKS.

337. —*suffer not thinking on, with the hobby-horse*;] Amongst the country May-games there was an hobby-horse, which, when the puritanical humour of those times opposed and discredited these games, was brought by the poets and ballad-makers as an instance of the ridiculous zeal of the sectaries: from these ballads Hamlet quotes a line or two. WARBURTON.

339.

339. —*O, the hobby-horse is forgot.*] In *Love's Labour's Lost*, this line is also introduced. In a small black letter book, entitled, *Plays Confuted*, by Stephen Gosson, I find the *hobby-horse* enumerated in the list of dances. "For the devil (says this author) beeside the beautie of the houses, and the stages, sendeth in gearish apparell, maskes, vauting, tumbling, daunc-ing of gigges, galiardes, morisces, *hobbi-horses*," &c. and in Green's *Tu Quoque*, 1599, the same expression occurs:

"The other *hobby-horse*, I perceive, is not for-gotten."

In TEXNOΓAMIA, or *The Marriage of the Arts*, 1618, is the following stage-direction:

"Enter a *hobby-horse*, dancing the morrice," &c.

Again, in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Women Pleased*:

Soto. "Shall the *hobby-horse* be forgot then,

"The hopeful *hobby-horse*, shall he lie foun-der'd?"

The scene in which this passage is, will very amply confirm all that Dr. Warburton has said concerning the *hobby-horse*.

Again, in Ben Jonson's *Entertainment for the Queen and Prince at Althorpe*:

"But see, the *hobby-horse* is forgot.

"Fool, it must be your lot

"To supply his want with faces,

"And some other buffoon graces."

See Fig. 5. in the plate at the end of the First Part

of

of *King Henry IV.* with Mr. Tollet's observations on it. STEEVENS.

341. *Marry, this is* miching malicho; *it means mischief.*] The Oxford editor, imagining that the speaker had here Englished his own cant phrase of *miching malicho*, tells us (by his glossary) that it signifies *mischief lying hid*, and that *malicho* is the Spanish *malheco*; whereas it signifies, *Lying in wait for the poisoner*; which, the speaker tells us, was the very purpose of this representation. It should therefore be read *malhechor*, Spanish, the *poisoner*. So *mich* signified, originally, to keep hid and out of sight; and, as such men generally did it for the purposes of *lying in wait*, it then signified to rob. And in this sense Shakspere uses the noun, a *micher*, when speaking of prince Henry amongst a gang of robbers. *Shall the blessed sun of heaven prove a* micher? *Shall the son of* England *prove a* thief? And in this sense it is used by Chaucer, in his translation of *Le Roman de la Rose*, where he turns the word *lierre* (which is *larron voleur*) by *micher*. WARBURTON.

I think Hanmer's exposition most likely to be right. Dr. Warburton, to justify his interpretation, must write *miching* for *malechor*, and even then it will be harsh. JOHNSON.

Dr. Warburton is right in his explanation of the word *miching*. So in *The Raging Turk*, 1631:

" ——wilt, thou envious dotard,
" Strangle my greatness in a *miching* hole?"

Again,

Again, in Stanyhurst's *Virgil*, 1582:

"—wherefore thus vainely in land Lybye *mitche*
you?"

The quarto reads—*munching* mallico. STEEVENS.

Miching, secret, covered, lying hid. In this sense Chapman, our author's contemporary, uses the word in *The Widow's Tears*, *Dods. Old Pl.* Vol. IV. p. 291, Lysander, to try his wife's fidelity, elopes from her: his friends report that he is dead, and make a mock funeral for him: his wife, to shew excessive sorrow for the loss of her husband, shuts herself up in his monument; to which he comes in disguise, and obtains her love, notwithstanding he had assured her in the mean time, that he was the man who murdered her husband. On which he exclaims,

"——Out upon the monster!
"Go tell the governour, let me be brought
"To die for that most famous villany;
"Not for this *miching* base transgression
"Of truant negligence:——"

And again, p. 301:

"My truant
"Was *micht*, sir, into a blind corner of the
tomb."

In this very sense it occurs in the *Philaster* of Beaumont and Fletcher, Vol. I. p. 142. "A rascal *miching* in a meadow." That is, as the ingenious editors (who have happily substituted *miching* for *milking*) remark, "A lean deer creeping, solitary, and withdrawn from the herd." WARTON.

The

The word *mitching* is daily used in the west of England for *playing truant*, or *skulking about in private for some sinister purpose*; and *malicho*, inaccurately written for *malheco*, signifies *mischief*; so that *mitching malicho* is *mischief* on the *watch for opportunity*.——When Ophelia asks Hamlet—"What means this—?" she applies to him for *an explanation of what she had just seen in the show*; and not, as Dr. Warburton would have it, *the* purpose *for which the show was contrived*.—Besides, *malhechor* no more signifies a *poisoner*, than the perpetrator of *any other* crime. HENLEY.

348. —*Be not you asham'd to shew*, &c.] The conversation of Hamlet with Ophelia, which cannot fail to disgust every modern reader, is probably such as was peculiar to the young and fashionable of the age of Shakspere, which was, by no means, an age of delicacy. The poet is, however, blamable; for extravagance of thought, not indecency of expression, is the characteristick of madness, at least of such madness as should be represented on the scene.

STEEVENS.

359. —*cart*——] A chariot was anciently so called. Thus Chaucer in *The Knight's Tale*, late edit. ver. 2024:

"The *carter* over-ridden with his *cart*."

STEEVENS.

361. —*sheen*] Splendour, lustre. JOHNSON.

371. —*even as they love.*] Here seems to be a line lost, which should have rhymed to *love*. JOHNSON.

This line is omitted in the folio. Perhaps a triplet was

was designed, and then instead of *love* we should read *lust*. The folio gives the next line thus:

"*For* women's fear and love *holds* quantity."

STEEVENS.

There is, I believe, no instance of a triplet being used in our author's time. Some trace of the lost line is found in the quartos, which read,

Either none in neither aught, &c.

Perhaps the word omitted might have been of this import:

Either none *they feel, or an excess approve*;

In neither aught, or in extremity. MALONE.

375. *And as my love is* siz'd, *my fear is so.*] Cleopatra expresses herself much in the same manner, with regard to her grief for the loss of Antony:

"———*our* size *of sorrow*,

"Proportion'd *to our* cause, *must be as* great

"*As* that *which makes it.*" THEOBALD.

376. —*Where love*, &c.] These two lines are omitted in the folio. STEEVENS.

379. — operant *powers*——] *Operant* is active. Shakspere gives it in *Timon* as an epithet to *poison*. Heywood has likewise used it in his *Royal King and Loyal Subject*, 1637:

"—may my *operant* parts

"Each one forget their office!"

The word is now obsolete. STEEVENS.

388. *The* instances,—] The *motives*. JOHNSON.

399. —*what to ourselves is debt*:] The performance of a resolution, in which only the *resolver* is interested,

is

is a debt only to himself, which he may therefore remit at pleasure. JOHNSON.

402. *The violence of either grief or joy,*
Their own enactures *with themselves destroy :*]
What grief or joy *enact* or determine in their violence, is revoked in their abatement. *Enactures* is the word in the quarto; all the modern editions have *enactors*. JOHNSON.

412. *And hitherto doth love on fortune tend :*
For who not needs, shall never lack a friend;
And who in want a hollow friend doth try,
Directly seasons him his enemy.] So in our author's *Passionate Pilgrim :*

" Every man will be thy friend,
" Whilst thou hast wherewith to spend ;
" But if store of crowns be scant,
" No man will supply thy want."

These coincidences may serve to refute an idea that some have entertained, that the lines spoken by the player were not written by Shakspere, but the production of a contemporary poet. MALONE.

424. *To desperation*, &c.] This and the following line are omitted in the folio. STEEVENS.

425. *An anchor's cheer in prison be my scope!*] May my whole liberty and enjoyment be to live on hermit's fare in a prison. *Anchor* is for *anchoret*. JOHNSON.

This abbreviation of the word *anchoret* is very ancient. I find it in the Romance of *Robert the Devil*, printed by *Wynkyn de Worde :* " We have robbed and killed nonnes, holy *aunkers*, preestes, clerkes," &c.

Again,

Again, " the foxe will be an *aunker*, for he begynneth to preche."

Again, in *The Vision of Pierce Plowman*:

" As *ankers* and hermits that hold them in her selles."

This and the foregoing line are not in the folio. I believe we should read—anchor's *chair*. So in the second Satire of Hall's fourth book, edit 1602, p. 18.

" *Sit* seven yeres pining in an *anchore's cheyre*,
" To win some parched shreds of minevere."

STEEVENS.

444. *The mouse-trap.*——] He calls it the *mouse-trap*, because it is ——— the thing

In which he'll *catch* the conscience of the king.

STEEVENS.

446. *Baptista* is, I think, in Italian, the name always of a man.

452. *You are as good as a* chorus.—] The use to which Shakspere converted the *chorus*, may be seen in his *History of Henry V.* HENLEY.

453. Ham. *I could interpret*, &c.] This refers to the interpreter, who formerly sat on the stage at all *motions* or *puppet-shews*, and interpreted to the audience.

So, in the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*:

" Oh excellent *motion!* oh exceeding *puppet!*
" Now will he *interpret* for her."

Again, in Greene's *Groatsworth of Wit*, 1621:

" ——It was I that penn'd the moral of man's wit,

the dialogue of Dives, and for seven years' space was absolute *interpreter of the puppets.*" STEEVENS.

458. *Still better, and worse.*] *i. e.* better in regard to the wit of your *double entendre*, but worse in respect of the grossness of your meaning. STEEVENS.

459. *So you* mistake *your husbands.*] Read, *So you* must take *your husbands*; that is, *for better, for worse.* JOHNSON.

Theobald proposed the same reading in his *Shakspere Restored*, however he lost it afterwards. STEEVENS.

So you mistake *your husbands.*] I believe this to be right: the word is sometimes used in this ludicrous manner. "Your true trick, rascal (says Ursula in *Bartholomew-Fair*), must be to be ever busie, and *mistake* away the bottles and cans, before they be half drunk off." FARMER.

Again, in Ben Jonson's *Masque of Augurs*: "—To *mistake* six torches from the chandry, and give them one."

Again, in the *Elder Brother* of Fletcher:

"I fear he will persuade me to *mistake* him."

STEEVENS.

473. *What! frighted with false fire!*] This speech is omitted in the quartos. STEEVENS.

477. *Lights, lights, lights!*] The quartos give this speech to Polonius. STEEVENS.

483. —turn Turk *with me*——] This expression has occurred already in *Much Ado about Nothing*; and I have

I have met with it in several old comedies. So, in Greene's *Tu Quoque*, 1614: "This it is to *turn Turk*, from an absolute and most complete gentleman to a most absurd, ridiculous, and fond lover." It means, I believe, no more than to change condition fantastically. Again, in Decker's *Honest Whore*, 1635:

"—'tis damnation,
"If you *turn Turk* again."

Perhaps the phrase had its rise from some popular story like that of *Ward* and *Dansiker*, the two famous pirates; an account of whose overthrow was published by A. Barker, 1609; and, in 1612, a play was written on the same subject, called, *A Christian turn'd Turk*. STEEVENS.

484. Provincial *roses*] Derived from *Provençal*, French. He means roses of *Provence*, a beautiful species of rose, and formerly much cultivated. WARTON.

485. —*a* cry *of players*,——] There is surely *here* no allusion to hounds (as Dr. Warburton supposes) whatever the origin of the term might have been. *Cry* means a troop or company in general, and is so used in *Coriolanus*:

"——You have made good work,
"You and your *cry*."

Again, in *A strange Horse-race*, by Thomas Decker, 1613: "The last race they ran (for you must know they had many) was from a *cry* of serjeants." MALONE.

486. Hor. *Half a* share.

Ham. *A whole one,* I.] It should be, I think,

A whole one;—*ay*———

For, &c.

The actors in our author's time had not annual salaries as at present. The whole receipts of the theatres were divided into shares, and each actor had one or more shares, or part of a share, according to his merit. See *The Account of the Ancient Theatres.*

MALONE.

488. —*O* Damon *dear,*] Hamlet calls Horatio by this name, in allusion to the celebrated friendship between *Damon* and *Pythias.* A play on this subject was written by Richard Edwards, and published in 1582.

STEEVENS.

491. *A very, very*———*peacock.*] This alludes to a fable of the birds choosing a king, instead of the eagle, a peacock. POPE.

The old copies have it *paiock, paicocke,* and *pajocke.* I substitute *paddock,* as nearest to the traces of the corrupted reading. I have, as Mr. Pope says, been willing to substitute any thing in the place of his *peacock.* He thinks a fable alluded to, of the birds choosing a king; instead of the *eagle,* a *peacock.* I suppose he must mean the fable of Barlandus, in which it is said, the birds, being weary of their state of anarchy, moved for the setting up of a king; and the *peacock* was elected on account of his gay feathers. But, with submission, in this passage of our Shakspere,

spere, there is not the least mention made of the *eagle* in antithesis to the *peacock*; and it must be by a very uncommon figure, that Jove himself stands in the place of his *bird*. I think, Hamlet is setting his father's and uncle's characters in contrast to each other: and means to say, that by his father's death the state was stripped of a godlike monarch, and that now in his stead reigned the most despicable poisonous animal that could be; a mere *paddock*, or *toad*. *PAD*, *bufo*, *rubeta major*; a toad. This word I take to be of Hamlet's own substituting. The verses, repeated, seem to be from some old ballad; in which, rhyme being necessary, I doubt not but the verse ran thus:

A very, very——ass. THEOBALD.

A peacock seems proverbial for a fool. Thus Gascoigne in his *Weeds*:

"A theefe, a cowarde, and a *peacocke* foole."

FARMER.

I believe *paddock* to be the true reading. In the last scene of this act, Hamlet, speaking of the king, uses the same expression:

"Would from a *paddock*, from a bat, a gib,
"Such dear concernings hide?" MALONE.

500. *Why then, belike,*—] Hamlet was going on to draw the consequence, when the courtiers entered.

JOHNSON.

—*he likes it not,* perdy.] *Perdy* is a corruption of *par Dieu*, and is not uncommon in the old plays. So in *The Play of the Four P's*, 1569:

"In that, you Palmer, as deputie,
"May cleerly discharge him *pardie*."

STEEVENS.

507. *With drink, sir?*] Hamlet takes particular care that his uncle's love of drink shall not be forgotten. JOHNSON.

541. —*by these pickers*, &c.] By these hands. JOHNSON.

By these hands, says Dr. Johnson; and rightly. But the phrase is taken from our Church catechism, where the catechumen, in his duty to his neighbour, is taught to keep his hands from *picking and stealing*. WHALLEY.

548. *Ay, sir, but* while the grass grows,—] The proverb is something musty. The remainder of this old proverb is preserved in Whetstone's *Promos and Cassandra*, 1578:

"Whylst grass doth growe, *oft sterves the seely steede*."

Hamlet means to intimate, that whilst he is waiting for the succession to the throne of Denmark, he may himself be taken off by death. MALONE.

550. —*recorders*:——] *i. e.* a kind of large flute. To *record* anciently signified to sing or modulate. STEEVENS.

551. —*recover the wind of me.*] So, in an ancient MS. play entitled *The Second Maiden's Tragedy*:

"——Is that next?
"Why then I have your ladyship *in the wind*."

STEEVENS.

Again,

Again, in Churchyard's *Worthiness of Wales*:

" Their cunning can with craft so cloke a troeth,
" That hardly we shall *have them in the winde*,
" To smell them forth, or yet their fineness finde." HENDERSON.

553. *O my lord, if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmannerly.*] *i. e.* if my duty to the *king* makes me press you a little, my love to *you* makes me still more importunate. If that makes me *bold*, this makes me even *unmannerly*. WARBURTON.

I believe we should read—*my love is* not *unmannerly*. My conception of this passage is, that, in consequence of Hamlet's moving to take the recorder, Guildenstern also shifts his ground, in order to take place himself *beneath* the prince in his new position. This Hamlet ludicrously calls " *going about to recover the wind*," &c. and Guildenstern may answer properly enough, I think, and like a courtier; " *if my duty* to the king makes me *too bold* in pressing you upon a disagreeable subject, *my love* to you will make me *not unmannerly*, in shewing you all possible marks of respect and attention." TYRWHITT.

562. —*ventages*—] The holes of a flute. JOHNSON.

563. —*and thumb*,—] The first quarto reads—with your fingers and the *umber*. This may probably be the ancient name for that piece of moveable brass at the end of a flute which is either raised or depressed by the finger. The word *umber* is used by Stowe the chronicler, who, describing a single combat between

two

two knights, says, " he brast up his *umber* three times." Here, the *umber* means the visor of the helmet. So, in Spenser's *Faery Queene*, B. III. c. 1. st. 42.

" But the brave maid would not disarmed be,
" But only vented up her *umbriere*,
" And so did let her goodly visage to appere."

Again, B. IV. c. 4.

" And therewith smote him on his *umbriere*."

Again, in the second book of Lidgate on the Trojan War, 1513:

" Thorough the *umber* into Troylus' face."

STEEVENS.

If a *recorder* had a brass key like the *German Flute*, we are to follow the reading of the quarto; for then the thumb is not concerned in the government of the ventages or stops. If a *recorder* was like a *tabourer's pipe*, which has no brass key, but has a stop for the thumb, we are to read—Govern these ventages with your finger and thumb. In *Cotgrave's Dictionary*, *ombre*, *ombraire*, *ombriere*, and *ombrelle*, are all from the Latin *umbra*, and signify a shadow, an umbrella, or any thing that shades or hides the face from the sun; and hence they may have been applied to any thing that hides or covers another; as for example, they may have been applied to the brass key that covers the hole in the German flute. So Spenser used *umbriere* for the visor of the helmet, as Rous's History of the Kings of England uses *umbrella* in the same sense.

TOLLET.

584.

584. *Methinks*, &c.] This passage has been printed in modern editions thus:

"Methinks it is like *an ouzle*.

"*Pol.* It is *black* like an *ouzle*."

The first folio reads, *It is like a* weazel.

Pol. It is *back'd* like *a weazel*.—

And what occasion for alteration there was, I cannot discover. The *weasel* is remarkable for the length of its *back*; but though I believe a *black weasel* is not easy to be found, yet it is as likely that the cloud should resemble a *weasel* in shape, as an *ouzle* (i. e. black-bird) in colour.

Mr. Tollet observes, that we might read—"it is *beck'd* like a weasel," *i. e.* weasel-snouted. So, in Holinshed's *Description of England*, p. 172. "if he be *wesell-becked*." Quarles uses this term of reproach in his *Virgin Widow*: "Go you *weazel-snouted*, addle-pated," &c. Mr. Tollet adds, that Milton in his *Lycidas*, calls a promontory *beaked*, *i. e.* prominent like the *beak* of a bird. STEEVENS.

589. *They fool me to the top of my bent.*—] They compel me to play the fool, till I can endure to do it no longer. JOHNSON.

603. —*be* shent,] To *shend*, is to reprove harshly, to treat with injurious language. STEEVENS.

Shent seems to mean something more than reproof by the following passage from *The Mirror for Magistrates*: "Thomas Mowbray, duke of Norfolk, is the speaker, and he relates his having betrayed the duke

of

of Gloucester and his confederates to the king, " for which," says he, " they were all tane and *shent*."

Hamlet surely means, " however my mother may be *hurt*, *wounded*, or *punished* by my *words*, let me never consent to put them in execution."

HENDERSON.

604. *To give them seals*—] *i. e.* put them in execution. WARBURTON.

605. *SCENE III. Enter King, Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern.*

King. *I like him not; nor stands it safe with us,*
To let his madness range. Therefore, prepare you;
I your commission will forthwith dispatch,
And he to England shall along with you:] In *The Hystory of Hamblet*, bl. let. the king does not adopt this scheme of sending Hamlet to England, till after the death of Polonius; and though he is described as doubtful whether Polonius was slain by Hamlet, his apprehension lest he might himself meet the same fate as the old courtier, is assigned as the motive for his wishing the prince out of the kingdom. This at first inclined me to think that this short scene, either from the negligence of the copyist or the Printer, might have been misplaced; but it is certainly printed as the author intended, for in the next scene Hamlet says to his mother, " I must to England; you know that?—" before the king could have heard of the death of Polonius. MALONE.

611.

611. *Out of his* lunes.] The old quartos read,

Out of his brows. THEOBALD.

Lunacies is the reading of the folio. I take *brows* to be, properly read, *frows*, which, I think, is a provencal word for *perverse humours*; which being, I suppose, not understood, was changed to *lunacies*. But of this I am not confident. JOHNSON.

Shakspere uses the word *lunes* in the same sense in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, and *The Winter's Tale*. From the redundancy of the measure nothing can be inferred.

Since this part of my note was written, I have met with an instance in support of Dr. Johnson's conjecture;

" —were you but as favourable as you are *frowish*—" *Tully's Love*, by Greene, 1616.

Perhaps, however, Shakspere designed a metaphor from horned cattle, whose powers of being dangerous increase with the *growth of their brows*. STEEVENS.

The present reading is fully established by a passage in *The History of Hamblet*, bl. let. which the author had, probably, here in his thoughts: " *Fengon* could not content himselfe, but still his mind gave him that the *foole* [*Hamlet*] would play him *some tricke of legerdemaine*. And in that conceit seeking to be rid of him, determined to find the means to doe it, by the aid of a stranger, making the king of England minister of his massacrous resolution, to whom he purposed to send him." MALONE.

The two readings of *brows* and *lunes*—when taken

in connection with the passages referred to by Mr. Steevens, in *The Winter's Tale* and *The Merry Wives*, —plainly figure forth the image under which the king apprehended danger from Hamlet:—viz. that of a bull, which, in his frenzy, might not only gore, but push him from his throne.—"The hazard that hourly grows out of his BROWS" (according to the quartos) corresponds to "*the* SHOOTS *from the* ROUGH PASH," [that is, *the* TUFTED PROTUBERANCE *on the head of a bull, from whence his horns spring*] alluded to in *The Winter's Tale*; whilst the imputation of impending danger to "*his* LUNES" (according to the other reading) answers as obviously to the jealous fury of the husband that thinks he has detected the infidelity of his wife. Thus, in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*:—

"Why, woman, your husband is in his old *lunes*—he so takes on yonder with my husband; so rails against all married mankind; so curses all Eve's daughters, and so buffets himself on the *forehead*, crying, peer out! peer out! that any *madness*, I ever yet beheld, seem'd but tameness, civility, and patience, to this distemper he is now in." HENLEY.

619. *That spirit, upon whose* weal—] So the quarto. The folio gives,

That spirit, upon whose *spirit*— STEEVENS.

638. *Since nature makes them partial*, &c.]

"———Matres omnes filiis

"In pecato adjutrices, auxilii in paterna injuria

"Solent esse.—" *Ter. Heaut.* act v. sc. 2.

STEEVENS.

639. —*of vantage.*—] By some opportunity of secret observation. JOHNSON.

646. *Though inclination be as sharp as* will;] *Will* is *command, direction.* Thus, *Ecclus.* xliii. 16. "—and at his *will* the south wind bloweth." The king says, his mind is in too great confusion to pray, even though his *inclination* were as strong as the *command* which requires that duty. STEEVENS.

To *will* is used by Marlowe in the sense of *to command*, in *Dido, Queen of Carthage*, a tragedy, 1594:

" And *will* my guards with Mauritanian darts,
" To wait upon him as their sovereign lord."

MALONE.

663. *May one be pardon'd, and retain the* offence?] He that does not amend what can be amended, *retains* his *offence.* The king kept the crown from the right heir. JOHNSON.

673. *Yet what can it, when one* cannot *repent?*] *What can* repentance *do for a man that cannot be* penitent, for a man who has only part of penitence, distress of conscience, without the other part, resolution of amendment? JOHNSON.

675. *O limed* soul!—] This alludes to *bird-lime.* Shakspere uses the same word again, *Henry VI.* P. II.

" Madam, myself have *lim'd* a bush for her."

STEEVENS.

680. —pat, *now he is praying*;] Thus the folio. The quartos read—*but* now, &c. STEEVENS.

682. —*That would be scann'd:*] *i. e.* that should be considered, estimated. STEEVENS.

684. *I, his* sole *son, do this same villain send*] The folio reads, *foule* son, a reading apparently corrupted from the quarto. The meaning is plain. *I, his* only *son*, who am bound to punish his murderer.

JOHNSON.

686. —hire *and* salary.—] Thus the folio. The quartos read—*base* and *silly*. STEEVENS.

695. *Up, sword*; *and know thou a more horrid* hent;] In the common editions,

Up, sword, and know thou a more horrid time.

THEOBALD.

To *hent* is used by Shakspere for, to *seize*, to *catch*, to *lay hold on*. *Hent* is, therefore, *hold*, or *seizure*. *Lay hold on* him, sword, at a more horrid time.

JOHNSON.

696. *When he is drunk, asleep, or in his rage*;

Or in the incestuous pleasures of his bed;] So in Marston's *Insatiate Countess*, 1603:

"Didst thou not kill him drunk?

"Thou shouldst, or in th' embraces of his lust."

STEEVENS.

700. ——*that his heels may kick at heaven*;] So in Heywood's *Silver Age*, 1613:

"Whose *heels tript* up, *kick'd 'gainst the firmament*."

STEEVENS.

702. *As hell, whereto it goes.*—] This speech, in which Hamlet, represented as a virtuous character, is not content with taking blood for blood, but contrives damnation for the man that he would punish, is too horrible to be read or to be uttered. JOHNSON.

The same fiend-like disposition is shewn by *Lodowick*, in Webster's *Vittoria Corombona*, 1612:

" ——to have poison'd
" The handle of his racket. O, that, that!—
" That while he had been bandying at tennis,
" He might have sworn himself to hell, and struck
" *His soul* into the hazard!"

Again, in the third of Beaumont and Fletcher's *Four Plays in one*:

" No, take him dead drunk now *without repentance.*" STEEVENS.

706. Pol. *He will come straight*, &c.] The concealment of Polonius in the queen's chamber, during the conversation between Hamlet and his mother, and the manner of his death, were suggested by the following passage in *The History of Hamblet*, bl. let. sig. D. " The counsellor entered secretly into the queene's chamber, and there hid himselfe behind the arras, and long before the queene and Hamlet came thither; who being craftie and pollitique; as soone as hee was within the chamber, doubting some treason, and fearing if he should speake severely and wisely to his mother, touching his secret practises, hee should be understood, and by that meanes intercepted, used his ordinary manner of dissimulation, and began to come [r. crow] like a cocke, beating with his arms (in such manner as cockes use to strike with their wings) upon the hangings of the chamber; whereby

feeling something stirring under them, he cried *a rat, a rat,* and presently drawing his sworde, thrust it into the hangings; which done, pulled the counsellour (half-deade) out by the heeles, made an end of kill-ing him, and being slaine, cut his body in pieces, which he caused to be boyled, and then cast it into an open vault or privie." MALONE.

709. ——*I'll* silence me e'en *here:*

Pray you, be round with him.] Sir T. Hanmer, who is followed by Dr. Warburton, reads,

——*I'll* sconce *me here.*

Retire to a place of *security.* They forget that the contrivance of Polonius to overhear the conference, was no more told to the queen than to Hamlet.—*I'll silence me even here,* is, *I'll use no more words.*

JOHNSON.

724. And—'*would* it *were not so!*—] The folio reads,

But would *you* were not so. HENDERSON.

732. *How now, a rat?*] This (as Dr. Farmer has observed) is an expression borrowed from *The History of Hamblet,* a translation from the French of Belleforest. STEEVENS.

740. It has been doubted whether Shakspere intended to represent the queen as accessary to the murder of her husband. The surprise she here expresses at the charge, seems to tend to her exculpation. Where the variation is not particularly marked out, we may presume, I think, that the poet intended

to

to tell his story as it had been told before. The following extract therefore from *The History of Hamblet*, bl. let. relative to this point, will probably not be unacceptable to the reader: "Fengon [the king in the present play] boldened and encouraged by such impunitie, durst venture to couple himself in marriage with her, whom he used as his concubine during good Horvendille's life; in that sort spotting his name with a double vice, incestuous adulterie, and paracide murther.——This adulterer and infamous murtherer slaundered his dead brother, that he would have slaine his wife, and that hee by chance finding him on the point ready to do it, in defence of the lady had slaine him. The unfortunate and wicked woman that had received the honour to be the wife of one of the valiantest and wisest princes in the North, imbased herselfe in such vile sort as to falsifie her faith unto him, and, which is worse, to marrie him that had bin the tyrannous murtherer of her lawful husband; which made diverse men think that she had beene the causer of the murther, thereby to live in her adultre without controle." *Hyst. of Hamb.* sig. C. 1, 2.

In the conference, however, with her son, on which the present scene is founded, she strongly asserts her innocence with respect to this fact:

"I know well, my sonne, that I have done thee great wrong in marrying with Fengon, the cruel tyrant and murtherer of thy father, and my loyal spouse; but when thou shalt consider the small meanes

of resistance, and the treason of the palace, with the little cause of confidence we are to expect, or hope for, of the courtiers, all wrought to his will, as also the power he made ready if I should have refused to like him; thou wouldst rather excuse, than accuse me of lasciviousness or inconstancy, much less offer me that wrong to suspect that ever thy mother *Geruth* once consented to the death and murther of her husband: swearing unto thee by the majestie of the gods, that if it had layne in me to have resisted the tyrant, although it had beene with the losse of my blood, yea and of my life, I would surely have saved the life of my lord and husband." Ibid. sig. D. 4.

It is observable, that in the drama neither the king or queen make so good a defence. Shakspere wished to render them as odious as he could, and therefore has not in any part of the play furnished them with even the semblance of an excuse for their conduct.

MALONE.

I know not in what part of this tragedy the king and queen could have been expected to enter into a vindication of their mutual conduct. The former, indeed, is rendered contemptible as well as guilty; but for the latter, our poet seems to have felt all that tenderness which the ghost recommends to the imitation of her son. STEEVENS.

740. *As kill a king?*] This interrogation may be considered as some hint, that the queen had no hand in the murder of Hamlet's father. STEEVENS.

755.

755. —*takes off the* rose] Alluding to the custom of wearing roses on the side of the face. See a note on a passage in *King John*, act i. WARBURTON.

I believe Dr. Warburton is mistaken; for it must be allowed that there is a material difference between an ornament worn on the *forehead*, and one exhibited on *the side of the face*. Some have understood these words to be only a metaphorical enlargement of the sentiment contained in the preceding line:

—blurs the grace and *blush* of modesty:

but as the *forehead* is no proper situation for a *blush* to be displayed in, we may have recourse to another explanation.

It was once the custom for those who were betrothed, to wear some flower as an external and conspicuous mark of their mutual engagement. So in *Spenser's Shepherd's Calendar for April*:

"Bring *coronations* and *sops in wine*,
"*Worn of paramours.*"

Lyte, in his *Herbal*, 1578, enumerates *sops in wine* among the smaller kind of single gilliflowers or pinks.

Figure 4, in the *Morrice-dance* (a plate of which is annexed to the First Part of *King Henry IV.*) has a flower fixed on his *forehead*, and seems to be meant for the *paramour* of the female character. The flower might be designed for a *rose*, as the colour of it is red in the painted glass, though its form is expressed with as little adherence to nature as that of the mary-

gold

gold in the hand of the lady. It may, however, conduct us to affix a new meaning to the lines in question. This flower, as I have since discovered, is exactly shaped like the *sops in wine*, now called the *Deptford Pink*. STEEVENS.

759. —*from the body of* contraction—] *Contraction* for *marriage contract*. WARBURTON.

761. ——*Heaven's face* doth *glow*;
Yea, *this solidity and compound mass,*
With tristful *visage, as against the doom,*
Is thought-sick at the act.] The old quarto reads:
Heaven's face does *glow,*
O'er *this solidity and compound mass,*
With heated *visage, as against the doom,*
Is thought-sick at the act. WARBURTON.

The word *heated*, though it agrees well enough with *glow*, is, I think, not so striking as *tristful*, which was, I suppose, chosen at the revisal. I believe the whole passage now stands as the author gave it. In the first reading, *Heaven's face* glows with tristful visage; and, *Heaven's face is* thought-sick. To the common reading there is no just objection. JOHNSON.

766. *That roars so loud,* &c.] The meaning is, *What is* this act, of which the *discovery*, or *mention*, cannot be made, but with this violence of clamour? JOHNSON.

——*and thunders in the* index?] Mr. Edwards observes, that the *indexes* of many old books were at that

that time inserted at the beginning, instead of the end, as is now the custom. This observation I have often seen confirmed.

So, in *Othello*, act ii. sc. 7.——" an *index* and obscure *prologue* to the history of lust and foul thoughts."

STEEVENS.

767. *Look here, upon this picture, and on this*;] It is evident from the following words,

A station, like the herald Mercury, &c.

that these pictures, which are introduced as miniatures on the stage, were meant for whole lengths, being part of the furniture of the queen's closet.

" ——*like Maia's son he* stood,

" *And shook his plumes.*"——Milton, B. V.

STEEVENS.

The introduction of miniatures in this place appears to be a modern innovation. A print prefixed to Rowe's edition of *Hamlet*, published in 1709, confirms Mr. Steevens's observation. There the two royal portraits are exhibited as half-lengths, hanging in the Queen's closet; and probably such had been the stage exhibition, from the time of the original performance of this tragedy to the death of Betterton.

MALONE.

770. *Hyperion's curls*;—] It is observable that *Hyperion* is used by Spenser with the same error in *quantity*. FARMER.

I have never met with an earlier edition of Marston's *Insatiate Countess* than that in 1603. In this the following

following lines occur, which bear a close resemblance to Hamlet's description of his father:

" A donative he hath of every god:
" *Apollo* gave him *locks*, *Jove* his high *front*."

STEEVENS.

772. *A* station—] *Station*, in this instance, does not mean *the spot where any one is placed*, but *the act of standing*. So in *Antony and Cleopatra*, act iii. sc. 3.

" Her motion and her *station* are as one."

On turning to Theobald's first edition, I find that he had made the same remark, and supported it by the same instance. The observation is necessary, for otherwise the compliment designed to the attitude of the king, would be bestowed on the place where Mercury is represented as standing. STEEVENS.

A station like the herald Mercury,

New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill;] I think it not improbable that Shakspere caught this image from Phaer's translation of Virgil (Fourth Eneid), a book that without doubt he had read:

" And now approaching neere, the top he seeth
and mighty lims
" Of *Atlas*, *mountain tough*, that *heaven* on boyst'rous *shoulders beares*;—
" There *first* on ground with wings of might doth *Mercury* arrive,
" Then down from thence right over seas himselfe doth headlong drive."

In the margin are these words: " The description of

of *Mercury*'s journey from *heaven*, along the *mountain* Atlas in Afrike, *highest* on earth." MALONE.

778. —*like a* mildew'd ear,

Blasting *his wholesome brother*.—] This alludes to *Pharaoh's Dream* in the 41st chapter of *Genesis*. STEEVENS.

779. —*wholesome* brother.—] The folio reads:— wholesome *breath*. HENDERSON.

781. —*batten*—] *i. e.* to grow fat. So in *Claudius Tiberius Nero*, 1607:

"——and for milk
"I *batten'd* was with blood."

Again, in Marlow's *Jew of Malta*, 1633:

"—make her round and plump,
"And *batten* more than you are aware."

Bat is an ancient word for *increase*.. Hence the adjective *batful*, so often used by Drayton in his *Poly-olbion*. STEEVENS.

783. *The* hey-day *in the blood*——] This expression occurs in Ford's *'Tis Pity she's a Whore*, 1633:

"——must
"The *hey-day* of your luxury be fed
"Up to a surfeit?" STEEVENS.

791. —*at hoodman-blind?*] This is, I suppose, the same as *blindman's-buff*. So, in the *Wise Woman of Hogsden*, 1638:

"Why should I play at *hoodman-blind?*"

Again, in *Two lamentable Tragedies in One, the One a Murder of Master Beech*, &c. 1601:

"Pick

" Pick out men's eyes, and tell them that's the sport
" Of *hoodman-blind.*" STEEVENS.

792. *Eyes without*, &c.] This and the three following lines are omitted in the folio. STEEVENS.

795. *Could not so* mope,] *i. e.* could not exhibit such marks of stupidity. The same word is used in *The Tempest*, sc. ult.—

" And were brought *moping* hither."

STEEVENS.

796. ——*Rebellious hell,*
If thou canst mutiny in a matron's bones, &c.]
Alluding to what he had told her before, that her enormous conduct shewed a kind of possession.

—*What* devil *was't,*
That thus hath, &c —

And again afterwards:

For use can almost change the stamp of nature,
And master even the devil, or throw him out
With wondrous potency.— WARBURTON.

797. —*mutiny*—] The old copies read *mutine.* Shakspere calls *mutineers, mutines,* in a subsequent scene. STEEVENS.

802. —*reason* panders *will.*] So the folio, I think rightly; but the reading of the quarto is defensible:

—*reason* pardons *will.* JOHNSON.

805. —*grained*—] Dyed in grain. JOHNSON.

806. *As will not leave their tinct.*] The quartos read,

As will *leave there* their tinct. STEEVENS.

808. —incestuous *bed*;] The folio has *enseamed*, that is, *greasy* bed. JOHNSON.

Beaumont and Fletcher use the word *inseamed* in the same sense, in the third of their *Four Plays in One*:

"His leachery *inseam'd* upon him."

In the *Book of Haukyng*, &c. bl. let. no date, we are told that "*Ensayme* of a hauke is *the grece*."

In most places it means the grease or oil with which clothiers besmear their wool, to make it draw out in spinning. *Incestuous* is the reading of the quarto, 1611. STEEVENS.

In the west of England, the *inside fat* of a goose, when dissolved by heat, is called its *seam*; and Shakspere has used the word in the same sense in his *Troilus and Cressida*:

"————————Shall the proud lord,
"That bastes his arrogance with his own *seam*."

HENLEY.

816. —*vice of kings*:] A low mimick of kings. The vice is the fool of a farce; from whom the modern *Punch* is descended. JOHNSON.

818. *That from a shelf*, &c.] This is said not unmeaningly, but to shew, that the usurper came not to the crown by any glorious villany that carried danger with it, but by the low cowardly theft of a common pilferer. WARBURTON.

821. *A king of shreds and patches*:] This is said, pursuing the idea of the *vice of kings*. The *vice* was dressed as a fool, in a coat of party-coloured patches. JOHNSON.

823. —*your*—] The folio reads *you*.

HENDERSON.

826. —*laps'd in time and passion*,—] That, having suffered *time* to *slip*, and *passion* to *cool*, *let's go*, &c. JOHNSON.

833. Conceit *in weakest bodies strongest works*:] *Conceit* for *imagination*. So, in the *Rape of Lucrece*:

"And the *conceited* painter was so nice."

MALONE.

841. —*like life in* excrements.] The hairs are excrementitious, that is, without life or sensation; yet those very hairs, as if they had life, start up, &c.

POPE.

857. *My father, in his habit as he liv'd!*] If the poet means by this expression, that his father appeared in his own *familiar habit*, he has either forgot that he had originally introduced him in *armour*, or must have meant to vary his dress at this his last appearance. The difficulty might perhaps be a little obviated by pointing the line thus:

My father—in his habit—as he liv'd. STEEVENS.

862. *Ecstasy!*] *Ecstasy* in this place, and many others, means a temporary alienation of mind, a fit. So, in *Eliosto Libidinoso*, a novel, by John Hinde, 1606: "—that bursting out of an *ecstacy* wherein she had long stood, like one beholding Medusa's head, lamenting," &c. STEEVENS.

874. —*do not spread the compost*, &c.] Do not, by any new indulgence, heighten your former offences.

JOHNSON.

878. —*curb*,—] That is, *bend* and *truckle*. Fr. *courber*. So, in *Pierce Plowman*:

"Then I *courbid* on my knees," &c.

STEEVENS.

884. *That monster, custom, who all sense doth eat,*
Of habit's devil, *is angel yet in this*;] This passage is left out in the two elder folios: it is certainly corrupt, and the players did the discreet part to stifle what they did not understand. *Habit's devil* certainly arose from some conceited tamperer with the text, who thought it was necessary, in contrast to *angel*. The emendation of the text I owe to the sagacity of Dr. Thirlby:

That monster custom, who all sense doth eat
Of habits evil, *is angel*, &c. THEOBALD.

I think Thirlby's conjecture wrong, though the succeeding editors have followed it; *angel* and *devil* are evidently opposed. JOHNSON.

890. —*the next, more easy*:] This passage, as far as *potency*, is omitted in the folio. STEEVENS.

903. *One word more*, &c.] This passage I have restored from the quartos. STEEVENS.

907. —his *mouse*;] *Mouse* was once a term of endearment. So in Warner's *Albion's England*, 1602, B. II. chap. 10.

"God bless thee *mouse*, the bridegroom said," &c.

Again, in the *Menæchimi*, 1595: "Shall I tell thee, sweet *mouse*? I never look upon thee, but I am quite out of love with my wife." STEEVENS.

908. —*reechy* kisses.] *Reechy* is smoky. The author meant to convey a coarse idea, and was not very scrupulous in his choice of an epithet. The same, however, is applied with greater propriety to the neck of a cook-maid in *Coriolanus*. Again, in *Hans Beer-Pot's Invisible Comedy*, 1618:

" —bade him go
" And wash his face, he look'd so *reechily*,
" Like bacon hanging on the chimney's roof."

STEEVENS.

Reechy is certainly not *smoky*, but in an abusive signification. It properly means, *steaming with exsudation*, and seems to have been selected, to convey, in this place, its grossest import. HENLEY.

911. *That I essentially am not in madness,*
But mad in craft.—] The reader will be pleased to see Dr. Farmer's extract from the old quarto *Historie of Hamblet*, of which he had a fragment only in his possession.—" It was not without cause, and juste occasion, that my gestures, countenances, and words, seeme to proceed from a madman, and that I desire to haue all men esteeme mee wholy depriued of sence and reasonable understanding, bycause I am well assured, that he that hath made no conscience to kill his owne brother (accustomed to murthers, and allured with desire of gouernement without controll in his treasons) will not spare to saue himselfe with the like crueltie, in the blood and flesh of the loyns of his brother, by him massacred: and therefore it is better for me to fayne madnesse, then to use

my

my right sences as nature hath bestowed them upon me. The bright shining clearnes thereof I am forced to hide under this shadow of dissimulation, as the sun doth hir beams vnder some great cloud, when the wether in summer time ouercasteth: the face of a madman serueth to couer my gallant countenance, and the gestures of a fool are fit for me, to the end that, guiding myself wisely therin, I may preserue my life for the Danes and the memory of my late deceased father, for that the desire of reuenging his death is so ingrauen in my heart, that if I dye not shortly, I hope to take such and so great vengeance, that these countryes shall for euer speake thereof. Neuerthelesse I must stay the time, meanes, and occasion, lest by making ouer great hast, I be now the cause of mine own sodaine ruine and ouerthrow, and by that meanes end, before I beginne to effect my hearts desire: hee that hath to doe with a wicked, disloyall, cruell, and discourteous man, must vse craft, and politike inuentions, such as a fine witte can best imagine, not to discouer his interprise: for seeing that by force I cannot effect my desire, reason alloweth me, by dissimulation, subtilitie, and secret practices, to proceed therein." STEEVENS.

914. —*a* gib,] So in Drayton's Epistle from *Elinor Cobham* to *Duke Humphrey*:

"And call me beldam, *gib*, witch, night-mare, trot."

Gib was a common name for a cat. So in Chaucer's *Rom. of the Rose*, ver. 6204:

" —*gibbe* our cat,
" That waiteth mice and rats to killen."

STEEVENS.

917. *Unpeg the basket on the house's top,*

Let the birds fly;—] Sir John Suckling, in one of his letters, may possibly allude to the same story: " It is the story of the *jackanapes* and the partridges; thou starest after a beauty till it is lost to thee, and then let'st out another, and starest after that till it is gone too." WARNER.

919. *To try* conclusions——] *i. e.* experiments. STEEVENS.

924. *I must to England*;——] Shakspere does not inform us how Hamlet came to know that he was to be sent to England. Rosencrantz and Guildensterne were made acquainted with the king's intentions for the first time in the very last scene; and they do not appear to have had any communication with the prince since that time. Add to this, that in a subsequent scene, when the king, after the death of Polonius, informs Hamlet he was to go to England, he expresses great surprise, as if he had not heard any thing of it before.—This last, however, may perhaps be accounted for, as contributing to his design of passing for a madman. MALONE.

926. *There's letters seal'd*, &c.] The nine following verses are added out of the old edition. POPE.

927. —*adders fang'd*,] That is, adders with their *fangs*, or *poisonous teeth*, undrawn. It has been the practice of mountebanks to boast the efficacy of their antidotes

antidotes by playing with vipers, but they first disabled their fangs. JOHNSON.

936. —*the* guts—] The word *guts* was not anciently so offensive to delicacy as it is at present; but was used by Lilly (who made the *first* attempt to polish our language) in his serious compositions. So in his *Midas*, 1592: "Could not the treasure of Phrygia, nor the tributes of Greece, nor mountains in the East, whose *guts* are gold, satisfy thy mind?" In short, *guts* was used where we now use *entrails*. Stanyhurst often has it in his translation of Virgil, 1582:

"Pectoribus inhians spirantia consulit *exta*."

"She weens her fortune by *guts* hoate smoake to conster." STEEVENS.

940. *Come, sir, to draw toward an end with you:*] Shakspere has been unfortunate in his management of the story of this play, the most striking circumstances of which arise so early in its formation, as not to leave him room for a conclusion suitable to the importance of its beginning. After this last interview with the *Ghost*, the character of Hamlet has lost all its consequence. STEEVENS.

ACT IV.

THIS play is printed in the old editions without any separation of the acts. The division is modern and arbitrary; and is here not very happy, for the pause is made at a time when there is more continuity of action than in almost any other of the scenes.

JOHNSON.

Line 4. *Bestow this place on us a little while.*] This line is wanting in the folio. STEEVENS.

5. —my good *lord*,—] The quartos read—*mine own* lord. STEEVENS.

19. —*out of* haunt,] *Out of haunt*, means *out of company*. So in *Antony and Cleopatra*:

" Dido and her Sichæus shall want troops,
" And all the *haunt* be ours."

Again, in Warner's *Albion's England*, 1602, Book V. chap. 26.

" And from the smith of heaven's wife allure the amorous *haunt*."

The place where men assemble, is often poetically called the *haunt of men*. So, in *Romeo and Juliet*:

" We talk here in the publick *haunt* of men."

STEEVENS.

26. —*like some ore*,] Shakspere seems to think *ore* to be *or*, that is, gold. Base metals have *ore* no less than precious. JOHNSON.

Minerals

Minerals are *mines*. So, in the *Golden Remains* of Hales of Eton, 1673, p. 34. Controversies of the times like "Spirits in the *minerals*, with all their labour nothing is done." STEEVENS.

42. *Whose whisper o'er the world's diameter,*
As level as the cannon to his blank,
Transports its poison'd shot, may miss our name,
And hit the woundless air.—O, *come away!*]

Mr. Pope takes notice, that I replace some verses that were imperfect (and, though of a *modern* date, seem to be genuine), by inserting two words. But to see what an accurate and faithful collator he is, I produced these verses in my *Shakspere Restored*, from a quarto edition of *Hamlet*, printed in 1637, and happened to say, that they had not the authority of any earlier date in print, that I knew of, than that quarto. Upon the strength of this Mr. Pope comes and calls the lines *modern*, though they are in the quartos of 1605 and 1611, which I had not then seen, but both of which Mr. Pope pretends to have collated. The verses carry the very stamp of Shakspere upon them. The coin, indeed, has been clipt from our first receiving it, but it is not so diminished, but that with a small assistance we may hope to make it pass current. I am far from affirming, that, by inserting the words, *For haply, slander*, I have given the poet's very words; but the supplement is such as the sentiment naturally seems to demand. The poet has the same thought, concerning the diffusive powers of *slander*, in another of his plays:

"——No,

" ——No, 'tis *slander* ;
" Whose edge is sharper than the sword, whose tongue
" Out-venoms all the worms of Nile, whose breath
" Rides on the posting winds, and doth bely
" All corners of the world." *Cymbeline.*

THEOBALD.

47. —*But soft,*] I have added these two words from the quartos. STEEVENS.

64. —*like an* ape,—] The quarto has *apple*, which is generally followed. The folio has *ape*, which Hanmer has received, and illustrated with the following note:

" It is the way of monkies in eating, to throw that part of their food, which they take up first, into a pouch they are provided with on the side of their jaw, and then they keep it, till they have done with the rest." JOHNSON.

Surely this should be " like an *ape*, an *apple*."

FARMER.

73. *The body is with the king,*—] This answer I do not comprehend. Perhaps it should be, *The body is* not *with the king*, for *the king is not with the body*.

JOHNSON.

Perhaps it may mean this. The body is in the king's house (*i. e.* the present king's), yet the king (*i. e.* he who should have been king) is not with the body. Intimating that the usurper is here, the true king in a better place. Or it may mean—*the guilt of*

the

the murder lies with the king, but the king is *not where the body lies.* The affected obscurity of Hamlet must excuse so many attempts to procure something like a meaning. STEEVENS.

75. *Guil.* A thing, *my lord?*

Ham. Of nothing;] So, in the Spanish tragedy:

"In troth, my lord, it is a *thing of nothing.*"

And in one of Harvey's *Letters*, "a silly bug-beare, a sorry puffe of winde, *a thing of nothing.*" FARMER.

So, in Decker's *Match me in London*, 1631:

"At what dost thou laugh?

"At *a thing of nothing*, at thee."

Again, in *Look about you*, 1600:

"And believe a little thing would please her,

"A very little thing, *a thing of nothing.*"

STEEVENS.

Mr. Steevens has given here many parallelisms: but the origin of all is to be looked for, I believe, in the 144th Psalm, ver. 5. "Man is like a thing of nought." You must have observed, that the book of Common Prayer, and the translation of the Bible into English, furnished our old writers with many forms of expression, some of which are still in use.

WHALLEY.

76. —*Hide fox*,—] There is a play among children called, *Hide fox, and all after.* HANMER.

The same sport is alluded to in Decker's *Satiromastix*: "—our unhandsome-faced poet does play at bo-peep

bo-peep with your grace, and cries—*All hid, as boys do.*"

This passage is not in the quarto. STEEVENS.

104. *Alas, alas!*] This speech, and the following, are omitted in the folio. STEEVENS.

122. *With fiery quickness:*] These words are not in the quartos. STEEVENS.

123. —*the wind at* help,] *i. e.* at *hand*, ready,—ready to help or assist you. REMARKS.

144. ————set

Our sovereign process;—] *To set*, is an expression taken from the gaming-table. STEEVENS.

146. *By letters* conjuring—] Thus the folio. The quarto reads,

By letters congruing. STEEVENS.

The reading of the folio is supported by the following passage in *The Hystory of Hamblet*, bl. let. "——making the king of England minister of his massacring resolution; to whom he proposed to send him [Hamlet], and by letters *desire* him to put him to death." So, also, by a subsequent line:

"*Ham.* Wilt thou know
"The effect of what I wrote?
"*Hor.* Ay, good my lord.
"*Ham.* An earnest *conjuration* from the king,"
&c.

The circumstances mentioned as inducing the king to send the prince to England, rather than elsewhere, are likewise found in *The Hystory of Hamblet.*

MALONE.

153.

153. *Craves*——] Thus the quartos. The folio —*claims*. STEEVENS.

160. *Good sir*, &c.] The remaining part of this scene is omitted in the folio. STEEVENS.

186. —*chief good, and market*—] If his highest good, and *that for which he sells his time*, be to sleep and feed. JOHNSON.

188. —*large discourse*,] Such latitude of comprehension, such power of reviewing the past, and anticipating the future. JOHNSON.

205. ——*Rightly, to be great*
Is not to stir without, &c.] This passage I have printed according to the copy. The sentiment of Shakspere is partly just, and partly romantick.

——*Rightly to be great*,
Is not to stir without great argument;

is exactly philosophical.

But greatly to find quarrel in a straw,
When honour's at the stake,

is the idea of a modern hero. *But then*, says he, *honour is an argument, or subject of debate, sufficiently* great, *and* when honour is at stake, we must *find cause of quarrel in a straw*. JOHNSON.

210. *Excitements of my reason, and my blood*,] Provocations which excite both my reason and my passions to vengeance. JOHNSON.

216. —*continent*] *Continent*, in our author, means that which comprehends or encloses. So, in *King Lear*:

"Rive your concealing *continents*." STEEVENS.

225. *Spurns* enviously *at straws*;—] *Envy* is much oftener put by our poet (and those of his time) for direct *aversion*, than for *malignity conceived at the sight of another's excellence or happiness*. STEEVENS.

228. —*to* collection;—] *i. e.* to deduce consequences from such premises. So, in *Cymbeline*, scene the last:

"——whose containing
"Is so from sense to hardness, that I can
"Make no *collection* of it."

See the note on this passage. STEEVENS.

—*they* aim *at it*,] The quartos read—they *yawn* at it.

To *aim* is to guess. STEEVENS.

232. *Though nothing sure, yet much* unhappily.] *i. e.* though her meaning cannot be certainly collected, yet there is enough to put a mischievous interpretation to it. WARBURTON.

That *unhappy* once signified *mischievous*, may be known from P. Holland's translation of *Pliny's Nat. Hist.* Book XIX. ch. 7. "the shrewd and *unhappie* foules which lie upon the lands, and eat up the seed new sowne." We still use *unlucky* in the same sense. STEEVENS.

233. *'Twere good, she were spoken with*;—] These lines are given to the queen in the folio, and to Horatio in the quarto.

I think the two first lines of Horatio's speech belong to him, the rest to the queen. BLACKSTONE.

237. —*to some great* amiss :] Shakspere is not singular in his use of this word as a substantive. So, in the *Arraignment of Paris*, 1584:

" Gracious forbearers of this world's *amiss*."

Again, in Lilly's *Woman in the Moon*, 1597:

" Pale be my looks to witness my *amiss*."

Again, in Greene's *Disputation between a He Coneycatcher*, &c. 1592: " —revive in them the memory of my great *amiss*." STEEVENS.

242. *How should I your true love*, &c.] There is no part of this play, in its representation on the stage, is more pathetick than this scene, which I suppose proceeds from the utter insensibility of Ophelia to her own misfortunes.

A great sensibility, or none at all, seems to produce the same effect. In the latter, the audience supply what she wants, and with the former they sympathize.

Sir J. REYNOLDS.

244. *By his cockle hat, and staff,*
And by his sandal shoon.] This is the description of a pilgrim. While this kind of devotion was in favour, love-intrigues were carried on under that mask. Hence the old ballads and novels made pilgrimages the subjects of their plots. The cockle-shell hat was one of the essential badges of this vocation: for the chief places of devotion being beyond sea, or on the coasts, the pilgrims were accustomed to put cockle-shells upon their hats, to denote the intention or performance of their devotion. WARBURTON.

So, in Green's *Never too Late*, 1616, a pilgrim is described:

" A hat of straw like to a swain,
" Shelter for the sun and rain,
" With a *scallop-shell* before," &c.

Again, in *The Old Wives Tale*, by George Peele, 1595: " I will give thee a Palmer's *staff* of yvorie, and a *scallop-shell* of beaten gold." STEEVENS.

257. Larded *all with sweet flowers*:] The expression is taken from cookery. JOHNSON.

258. —*did go.*] The old editions read—*did* not *go*. STEEVENS.

261. —*the owl was a Baker's daughter.*] This was a legendary story, which both Dr. Johnson and myself have read, yet in what book at least I cannot recollect. Our Saviour being refused bread by the *daughter of a Baker*, is described as punishing her by turning her into an *owl*. STEEVENS.

267. *To-morrow is*, &c.] Without doubt,

" *Good-morrow*, 'tis *Saint Valentine*'s day.

FARMER.

271. —don'd *his clothes*,] To *don*, is to *do on*, to put on, as *doff* is to *do off*, put off. STEEVENS.

272. *And* dupt *the chamber-door*;] To *dup*, is to *do up*; to lift the latch. It were easy to write,

And op'd———— JOHNSON.

To *dup* was a common contraction of to *do up*. So in *Damon and Pythias*, 1582: " —the porters are drunk, will they not *dup* the gate to-day?"

Lord

Lord Surrey, in his translation of the second Æneid, renders *Panduntur portæ*, &c. "The gates *cast up*, we issued out to play." The phrase seems to have been adopted either from *doing up* the *latch*, or drawing up the *portcullis*. Again, in the *Cooke's Play*, in the Chester collection of mysteries, MS. Harl. 1013, p. 140.

"*Open up* hell-gates anon."

It appears from *Martin Mark-all's Apologie to the Belman of London*, 1610, that in the cant of gypsies, &c. *Dup the gigger*, signified *to open the door*. STEEVENS.

277. *By* Gis,—] I rather imagine it should be read,

By Cis,———

That is, by St. Cecily. JOHNSON.

——by *Saint Charity*,] *Saint Charity* is a known saint among the Roman Catholicks. Spenser mentions her, Eclog. 5, 255.

"Ah dear lord, and sweet *Saint Charity!*"

I find, *by Gisse*, used as an adjuration, both by Gascoigne in his Poems, by Preston in his *Cambyses*, and in the comedy of *See me, and see me not*, 1618:

"By *Gisse* I swear, were I so fairly wed," &c.

Again, in *King Edward I.* 1599:

"By *Gis*, fair lords, ere many daies be past,"

&c.

Again, in Heywood's 23d Epigram, Fourth Hundred:

"Nay, by *Gis*, he looketh on you, maister, quoth he."

Again, in *The Downfall of Robert, Earl of Huntington*, 1601:

"Therefore, sweet master, for *Saint Charity*."

STEEVENS.

In the scene between the bastard Faulconbridge, and the friars and nunne in the first part of *The troublesome Raigne of King John*, (edit. 1779, p. 256, &c.) the nunne swears *by Gis*, and the friers pray to *Saint Withold*, (another obsolete saint mentioned in *King Lear*, act iii.) and adjure him by *Saint Charitie* to hear them.

BLACKSTONE.

By Gis———

There is not the least mention of any saint whose name corresponds with this, either in the *Roman Calendar*, the service *in Usum Sacrum*, or in the Benedictionary of Bishop Athelwold. I believe the word to be only a corrupted abbreviation of *Jesus*, the letters J. H. S. being anciently all that was set down to denote that sacred name, on altars, the covers of books, &c.

RIDLEY.

280. *By cock*,——] This is likewise a corruption of the sacred name. Many instances of it are given in a note at the beginning of the fifth act of the Second Part of *King Henry IV*.

STEEVENS.

282. *He answers.*] These words I have added from the quartos.

STEEVENS.

290. Come, my coach! *good night, ladies*; *good night*,——] In Marlow's *Tamburlaine*, 1591, Zabina in her frenzy uses the same expression:

"Hell *make ready my coach*, my chair, my jewels. I *come*, I *come*."

MALONE.

301. ——*but* greenly,] But *unskilfully*; with *greenness*; that is, without *maturity* of judgment.

JOHNSON.

302. *In* hugger-mugger *to inter him*:—] All the modern editions that I have consulted, give it,

In private *to inter him*;——

That the words now replaced are better, I do not undertake to prove; it is sufficient that they are Shakspere's: if phraseology is to be changed as words grow uncouth by disuse, or gross by vulgarity, the history of every language will be lost; we shall no longer have the words of any author; and, as these alterations will be often unskilfully made, we shall in time have very little of his meaning. JOHNSON.

This expression is used in *The Revenger's Tragedy*, 1609:

"——he died like a politician

"In *hugger-mugger*."

Shakspere probably took the expression from the following passage in Sir T. North's translation of Plutarch:—"Antonius thinking that his body should be honourably buried, and not in *hugger-mugger*."

It appears from Greene's *Groundwork of Coneycatching*, 1592, that *to hugger* was to lurk about.

STEEVENS.

307. Feeds *on his wonder*,—] The folio reads,

Keeps *on his wonder*,——

The quarto,

Feeds *on* this *wonder*.——

Thus

Thus the true reading is picked out from between them. JOHNSON.

310. *Wherein necessity*, &c.] *Wherein*, that is, *in which pestilent speeches necessity*, or *the obligation of an accuser to support his charge, will nothing stick*, &c. JOHNSON.

313. *Like to a murdering piece,—*] Such a piece as assassins use, with many barrels. It is necessary to apprehend this, to see the justness of the similitude. WARBURTON.

This explanation of Dr. Warburton is right; and a passage in *The Double Marriage* of Beaumont and Fletcher will justify it:

" And, like a *murdering piece*, aims not at one,
" But all that stand within the dangerous level."

STEEVENS.

Both this passage, and the context of Shakspere, shew, that the *murdering piece* had not *many* barrels, but *one*, very capacious; or, in other words, was, what is now styled a *blunderbuss*. HENLEY.

315. *Alack!* &c.] This speech of the queen is omitted in the quartos. STEEVENS.

316. *—my Switzers?——*] Mr. Reed remarks, that in many of our old plays, the guards attendant on kings are called *Switzers*; without any regard to the country where the scene lies, and cites in particular, Beaumont and Fletcher's *Noble Gentleman*, act iii. scene 1.

" ——was it not
" Some place of gain, as clerk to the great band
" Of

" Of marrow-bones, that people call the *Switzers?*
" Men made of beef and sarcenet ?"

319. *The ocean, over-peering of his* list,] The lists are the barriers which the spectators of a tournament must not pass. JOHNSON.

330. *O, this is counter, you false Danish dogs.*] Hounds run *counter* when they trace the trail backwards. JOHNSON.

341. —*unsmirched brow*] *i. e.* clean, not defiled. To *besmirch*, our author uses, act i. sc. 5. STEEVENS.

374. —*life-rend'ring pelican,*] So, in the ancient *Interlude of Nature,* bl. let. no date:

" Who taught the cok hys watche-howres to observe,
" And syng of corage wyth shryll throte on hye?
" Who taught the *pellycan* her tender hart to carve?—
" For she nolde suffer her byrdys to dye?"

It is almost needless to add that this account of the bird is entirely fabulous. STEEVENS.

380. —*to your judgment* 'pear,] So the quarto; the folio, and all the later editions, read,

———*to your judgment* pierce,

less intelligibly. JOHNSON.

This elision of the verb to *appear*, is common to Beaumont and Fletcher. So, in *The Maid in the Mill*:

" They '*pear* so handsomely, I will go forward."

Again,

" And

" And where they '*pear* so excellent in little,
" They will but flame in great." STEEVENS.

394. *They bore him bare-fac'd on the bier*, &c.] So, in Chaucer's *Knight's Tale*, late edit. ver. 2879:

" He laid him bare the visage on the bere,
" Therwith he wept that pitee was to here."

STEEVENS.

400. —*sing, Down-a-down.*——] Perhaps Shakspere alludes to *Phœbe's Sonnet*, by Thomas Lodge, which the reader may find in *England's Helicon*, 1614:

" *Downe a-downe,*
" Thus Phillis sung,
" By fancy once distressed, &c.
" And so sing I, with *downe a-downe,*" &c.

Down a-down is likewise the burthen of a song in the *Three Ladies of London*, 1584, and perhaps common to many others. STEEVENS.

401. *O, how the* wheel *becomes it!*——] The story alluded to I do not know; but perhaps the lady stolen by the steward was reduced to *spin*. JOHNSON.

You must sing Down a-down, &c.

O how the wheel *becomes it!*—] The *wheel* may mean no more than *the burthen of the song*, which she had just repeated, and as such was formerly used. I met with the following observation in an old quarto black letter book, published before the time of Shakspere:

" The song was accounted a good one, thogh it was not moche graced by the *wheele*, which in no wise accorded with the subject matter thereof."

I quote

I quote this from memory, and from a book of which I cannot recollect the exact title or date; but the passage was in a preface to some songs or sonnets. I well remember to have met with the word in the same sense in other old books.

Rota, however, as I am informed, is the ancient musical term in Latin for the burden of a song.

The ballad, alluded to by Ophelia, is perhaps entered on the books of the Stationers-Company. "October 1580. Four ballades of the Lord of Lorn and the *False Steward*," &c. STEEVENS.

O, how the wheel *becomes it!*] I am inclined to think that *wheel* is here used in its ordinary sense, and that these words allude to the occupation of the girl who is supposed to sing the song quoted by Ophelia.—The following lines in Hall's *Virgidemiarum*, 1597, appear to me to add some support to this interpretation:

"Some drunken rimer thinks his time well spent,
"If he can live to see his name in print;
"Who when he is once fleshed to the presse,
"And sees his handselle have such fair successe,
"*Sung* to *the wheele*, and sung unto the payle,
"He sends forth thraves of *ballads* to the sale."

Our author likewise furnishes an authority to the same purpose. *Twelfth Night*, act ii. sc. 4.

"———Come, the *song* we had last night:—
"The *spinsters* and the knitters in the sun
"Do use to *chaunt* it."

A musical

A musical antiquary may perhaps contend, that the controverted words of the text allude to an ancient instrument mentioned by Chaucer, and called by him a *rote*, by others a *vielle*; which was played upon by the friction of a *wheel*.

It is likewise enumerated with other instruments in the old metrical romance, called, *The Squire of low Degree*, bl. let.

" There was myrth and melodye,
" With harpe, getron, and sautry,
" With *rote*, ribible, and clokarde,
" With pypes, organ, and bumbard."

MALONE.

404. *There's rosemary, that's for remembrance;—and there's pansies, that's for thoughts.*] There is probably some mythology in the choice of these herbs, but I cannot explain it. *Pansies* is for *thoughts*, because of its name, *Pensées*; but why *rosemary* indicates *remembrance*, except that it is an ever-green, and carried at funerals, I have not discovered. JOHNSON.

So, in *All Fools*, a comedy, by Chapman, 1605:

" What flowers are these?—
" The *Pansie* this.
" O, that's for lovers' *thoughts!*"

Rosemary was anciently supposed to strengthen the memory, and was not only carried at funerals, but worn at weddings, as appears from a passage in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Elder Brother*, act iii. sc. 3. And from another in *Ram-Alley, or Merry Tricks*, 1611:

" —will I be *wed* this morning,
" Thou shalt not be there, nor once be graced
" With a piece of *rosemary*."

Again, in the *Noble Spanish Soldier*, 1634: " I meet few but are stuck with *rosemary*: every one asked me who was to be *married*."

Again, in Green's *Never too Late*, 1616: " —she hath given thee a nosegay of flowers, wherein as a top-gallant for all the rest, is set in *rosemary for remembrance*."

Again, in *A Dialogue between Nature and the Phœnix*, by R. Chester, 1601:

" There's *rosemarie*, the Arabians justifie
" (Physitions of exceeding perfect skill)
" It comforteth the braine and *memorie*," &c.

STEEVENS.

409. *There's* fennel *for you, and* columbines:] Greene, in his *Quip for an Upstart Courtier*, 1620, calls *fennel, women's weeds*: " fit generally for that sex, sith while they are maidens, they wish wantonly."

Among Turbervile's *Epitaphes*, &c. p. 42, b. I likewise find the following mention of *fennel*:

" Your *fenell* did declare
" (As simple men can showe)
" That flattrie in my breast I bare
" Where friendship ought to grow."

I know not of what *columbines* were supposed to be emblematical. They are again mentioned in *All Fools*, by Chapman, 1605:

"What's that?—a *columbine?*

"No: that *thankless* flower grows not in my garden."

Gerard, however, and other herbalists, impute few, if any, virtues to them; and they may therefore be styled *thankless*, because they appear to make no grateful return for their creation.

Again in the 15th Song of Drayton's *Polyolbion*:

"The *columbine* amongst, they sparingly do set."

From the *Caltha Poëtarum*, 1599, it should seem as if this flower was the emblem of cuckoldom:

"—the blew *cornuted* columbine,

"Like to the crooked horns of Acheloy."

STEEVENS.

Columbine was an emblem of cuckoldom, on account of the horns of its nectaria, which are remarkable in this plant. See Aquilegia, in Linnæus's Genera, 684. S. W.

410. *There's rue for you;—and here's some for me:* —*we may call it*, herb of grace o'Sundays:] *Herb of grace* is the name the country people give to *rue*. And the reason is, because that herb was a principal ingredient in the potion which the Romish priests used to force the possessed to swallow down when they exorcised them. Now these exorcisms being performed generally on a Sunday, in the church before the whole congregation, is the reason why she says, we may call it *herb of grace o'Sundays*. Sandys tells us, that at Grand Cairo there is a species of *rue* much

in

in request, with which the inhabitants perfume themselves, not only as a preservative against infection, but as very powerful against evil spirits. And the cabalistic Gaffarel pretends to have discovered the reason of its virtue, *La semence de rue est faicte comme une croix, et c'est paraventure la cause qu'elle a tant de vertu contre les possedez, et que l' Eglise s'en sert en les exorcisant.* It was on the same principle that the Greeks called *sulphur* θεῖον, because of its use in their superstitious purgations by fire. Which too the Romish priests employ to fumigate in their exorcisms; and on that account hallow or consecrate it.

WARBURTON.

There's rue for you; and here's some for me, &c.] I believe there is a quibble meant in this passage; *rue* anciently signifying the same as *Ruth*, i. e. sorrow. Ophelia gives the queen some, and keeps a proportion of it for herself. There is the same kind of play with the same word in *King Richard II.*

Herb of grace is one of the titles which *Tucca* gives to *William Rufus*, in Decker's *Satiromastix.* I suppose the first syllable of the surname *Rufus* introduced the quibble.

In *Doctor Do-good's Directions*, an ancient ballad, is the same allusion:

"If a man have light fingers that he cannot charme,

"Which will pick men's pockets, and do such like harme,

"He must be let blood, in a scarfe wear his arme,
"And drink the *herb grace* in a posset luke-warme."
STEEVENS.

The following passage from Greene's *Quip for an Upstart Courtier*, will furnish the best reason for calling *rue* herb of grace *o'Sundays*: "—some of them smil'd and said, *Rue* was called *Herbegrace*, which though they scorned in their youth, they might wear in their age, and it was never too late to say *miserere*."
HENLEY.

411. *You may wear your rue* with a difference.] This seems to refer to the rules of heraldry, where the younger brothers of a family bear the same arms *with a difference*, or mark of distinction. So, in Holinshed's *Reign of King Richard II.* p. 443: "because he was the youngest of the Spensers, he bare a border gules for a *difference*."

There may, however, be somewhat more implied here than is expressed. *You madam* (says Ophelia to the queen), *may call your* RUE *by its Sunday name,* HERB OF GRACE, *and so wear it with a difference, to distinguish it from mine, which can never be any thing but merely* RUE, i. e. *sorrow*.
STEEVENS.

Perhaps the difference consisted in Ophelia's wearing *rue*, as an emblem of *ruing* her own *unsuccessful passion*; whereas she gives *rue* to the queen, as *herb of grace o' Sundays*; to imply that she ought to *repent* the gratification of *her's*, by means of an *incestuous* marriage.
HENLEY.

412. —*There's a* daisy:—] Greene, in his *Quip for an Upstart Courtier*, has explained the significance also of this flower.—" Next them grew the DISSEMBLING *daisie*, to warne such light of love wenches, not to trust every faire promise that such amorous bachelors make them." HENLEY.

416. *For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy*,—] This is part of an old song, mentioned likewise by Beaumont and Fletcher. *Two Noble Kinsmen*, act iv. sc. 1.

" ——I can sing the broom,
" And *Bonny Robin*."

In the books of the Stationers-Company, 26 April, 1594, is entered " A ballad, intituled, A doleful adewe to the last Erle of Darbie, to the tune of *Bonny sweet Robin*." STEEVENS.

428. *God a'mercy on his soul!*
And of all Christian souls!——] This is the common conclusion to many of the ancient monumental inscriptions. See Weever's *Funeral Monuments*, p. 657, 658. Berthelette, the publisher of Gower's *Confessio Amantis*, 1554, speaking first of the funeral of Chaucer, and then of Gower, says, " —he lieth buried in the monasterie of Seynt Peter's at Westminster, &c. *On whose soules and all christen, Jesu have mercie*." STEEVENS.

432. —*common*——] Should not the king say, " Laertes, I must *commune* with your grief," &c.
HENDERSON.

444. *No trophy, sword, nor hatchment o'er his bones*,] This practice is uniformly kept up to this day. Not

only the sword, but the helmet, gauntlet, spurs, and tabard (*i. e.* a coat whereon the armorial ensigns were anciently depicted, from whence the term *coat of armour*) are hung over the grave of every knight.

Sir J. HAWKINS.

476. —*for the* bore *of the matter*] The *bore* is the caliber of a gun, or the capacity of the barrel. *The matter* (says Hamlet) *would carry heavier words.*

JOHNSON.

503. —*the general gender*——] The *common race* of the people. JOHNSON.

505. Work, *like the spring*—] This simile is neither very seasonable in the deep interest of this conversation, nor very accurately applied. If the *spring* had changed base metals to gold, the thought had been more proper. JOHNSON.

The folio, instead of—*work*, reads—*would*.

STEEVENS.

507. —*for so loud a wind*,] Thus the folio. One of the quartos reads—for so *lov'd, arm'd*. If these words have any meaning, it should seem to be—The instruments of offence I employ, would have proved too weak to injure one who is so *loved and arm'd* by the affection of the people. Their love, like *armour*, would revert the arrow to the bow. STEEVENS.

512. —*if praises may go back again*,] If I may praise what has been, but is now to be found no more.

JOHNSON.

517. *That we can let our beard be shook with danger*,] It is wonderful that none of the advocates for the learning

learning of Shakspere have told us that this line is imitated from Persius, Sat. 2.

" *Idcirco stolidam præbet tibi vellere barbam*
" *Jupiter?*" STEEVENS.

521. *How now?* &c.] Omitted in the quartos. THEOBALD.

522. *Letters*, &c.] Omitted in the quartos. STEEVENS.

527. *Of him that brought them.*] I have restored this hemistich from the quartos. STEEVENS.

558. *Laer.*] The next sixteen lines are omitted in the folio. STEEVENS.

567. *Of the unworthiest* siege.] Of the lowest rank. *Siege*, for *seat*, *place*. JOHNSON.

So in *Othello*:

" —I fetch my birth
" From men of royal *siege*." STEEVENS.

576. —*can*——] The folio reads, *ran*. HENDERSON.

581. —*in forgery of shapes and tricks*,] I could not contrive so many proofs of dexterity as he could perform. JOHNSON.

591. —*in your defence*,] That is, in the *science* of defence. JOHNSON.

594. —*the* scrimers—] The *fencers*. JOHNSON.

This passage is not in the folio. STEEVENS.

607. —*love is begun by time*;] This is obscure. The meaning may be, *love* is not innate in us, and co-essential to our nature, but begins at a certain time from some external cause, and being always subject

to

to the operations of time, suffers change and diminution. JOHNSON.

608. —*passages of proof*,] In transactions of daily experience. JOHNSON.

610. *There lives*, &c.] The next ten lines are not in the folio. STEEVENS.

618. *And then this* should *is like a spendthrift's* sigh,

That hurts by easing.—] This nonsense should be read thus:

And then this should *is like a spendthrift's* sign,

That hurts by easing;———

i. e. though a spendthrift's entering into bonds or mortgages gives him a present relief from his straits, yet it ends in much greater distresses. The application is, If you neglect a fair opportunity now, when it may be done with ease and safety, time may throw so many difficulties in your way, that, in order to surmount them, you must put your whole fortune into hazard. WARBURTON.

This conjecture is so ingenious, that it can hardly be opposed, but with the same reluctance as the bow is drawn against a hero whose virtues the archer holds in veneration. Here may be applied what Voltaire writes to the empress:

Le genereux François——

Te combat et t' admire.

Yet this emendation, however specious, is mistaken. The original reading is, not a *spendthrift's* sigh, but a *spendthrift sigh*; a *sigh* that makes an unnecessary waste of the vital flame. It is a notion very prevalent,

lent, that *sighs* impair the strength, and wear out the animal powers. JOHNSON.

Hence Shakspere, in *King Henry VI.* calls them

"—blood-consuming *sighs*."

The idea is enlarged upon in Fenton's *Tragical Discourses*, 1579: "Why staye you not in tyme the source of your scorching *sighs*, that have already drayned your body of his wholesome humoures, appointed by nature to give sucke to the entrals and inward partes of you?" MALONE.

631. —*he, being remiss,*] He being not vigilant or cautious. JOHNSON.

635. *A sword unbated,*—] *i. e.* not blunted as foils are. Or, as one edition has it, *embated* or *envenomed*. POPE.

There is no such reading as *embated* in any edition. In Sir Thomas North's Translation of Plutarch, is said of one of the *Metelli*, that "he shewed the people the cruel sight of fencers at *unrebated* swords." STEEVENS.

—*a pass of* practice,] *Practice* is often by Shakspere, and other writers, taken for an *insidious stratagem*, or *privy* treason, a sense not incongruous to this passage, where yet I rather believe, that nothing more is meant than a *thrust for exercise*. JOHNSON.

So, in *Look about You*, 1600:

"I pray God there be no *practice* in this change."

Again: "—the man is like to die?

"*Practice* by th' mass, *practice* by the, &c.—

"*Practice* by the Lord, *practice*, I see it clear."

Again,

Again, more appositely, in our author's *Twelfth Night*, act v. sc. ult.

"This *practice* hath most shrewdly *pass'd* upon thee." STEEVENS.

646. It is a matter of surprise, that no one of Shakspere's numerous and able commentators has remarked with proper warmth and detestation, the villanous assassin-like treachery of Laertes in this horrid plot. There is the more occasion that he should be here pointed out an object of abhorrence, as he is a character we are, in some preceding parts of the play, led to respect and admire. REMARKS.

649. *May fit us to our shape :—*] May *enable* us to *assume proper characters*, and to act our part.

JOHNSON.

653. —*blast in* proof.——] The word *proof* shews the metaphor to be taken from the trying or proving fire-arms or cannon, which often *blast* or *burst* in the *proof*. STEEVENS.

658. ——*I'll have* prepar'd *him*] Thus the folio. The quartos read,

I'll have *prefer'd* him. STEEVENS.

660. *If he by chance escape your venom'd* stuck,] For *stuck* read *tuck*, a common name for a *rapier*.

BLACKSTONE.

Stuck may yet be right. So, in *The Return from Parnassus*, a comedy, 1606: "Ay, here's a fellow, Judicio, that carried the deadly *stucke* in his pen." Again, in our author's *Twelfth Night*: "And he gives me the *stuck* with such a mortal motion."——

The

The quarto of 1637, however, has the reading proposed by Sir William Blackstone. MALONE.

661. —*But stay, what noise?*] I have recovered this from the quartos. STEEVENS.

663. *One woe doth tread upon another's heel*] A similar thought occurs in *Pericles Prince of Tyre*, 1609:

" One sorrow never comes, but brings an heir
" That may succeed as his inheritor."

STEEVENS.

666. —ascaunt *the brook,*] Thus the quartos. The folio reads, *aslant*. *Ascaunce* is interpreted in the Glossary to Chaucer,—*askew, aside, sideways*.

STEEVENS.

668. —*and* long purples,] By *long purple* is meant a plant, the modern botanical name of which is *orchis morio mas*, anciently *testiculus morionis*. The *grosser name* by which it passes, is sufficiently known in many parts of England, and particularly in the county where Shakspere lived. Thus far Mr. Warner. Mr. Collins adds, that in Sussex it is still called *dead men's hands*; and that in Lyte's *Herbal*, 1578, its various names, too gross for repetition, are preserved.

Dead men's thumbs are mentioned in an ancient bl. let. ballad, entitled *The Deceased Maiden Lover*:

" Then round the meddowes did she walke
" Catching each flower by the stalke,
" Such as within the meddowes grew
" As *dead mans thumbe* and hare-bell blew."

670. —*liberal*—] As in other instances, *licentious*.

REED.

677. *Which time, she chaunted snatches of old tunes;*] Fletcher, in his *Scornful Lady*, very invidiously ridicules this incident:

"I will run mad first, and if that get not pity,
"I'll drown myself to a most dismal ditty."

WARBURTON.

The quartos read—"snatches of old *lauds*," i. e. *hymns*. STEEVENS.

678. *As one* incapable *of her own distress,*] As one having no *understanding* or knowledge of her danger. See a former note on the words—

"————preaching to stones,
"Would make them *capable*." MALONE.

690. *The woman will be out.——*] *i. e.* tears will flow. So, in another of our author's plays:

"And all *the woman* came into my eyes."

MALONE.

ACT V.

Line 3. —MAKE *her grave* straight:——] Make her grave from east to west, in a direct line parallel to the church; not from north to south, athwart the regular line. This, I think, is meant. JOHNSON.

I cannot think that this means any more than *make her grave immediately*. She is to be buried in *christian burial*,

burial, and consequently the grave is to be made as usual. My interpretation may be justified from the following passages in *King Henry V.* and the play before us: "—We cannot lodge and board a dozen or fourteen gentlewomen who live by the prick of their needles, but it will be thought we keep a bawdy-house *straight*."

Again, in *Hamlet*, act iii. sc. 4.

"*Pol.* He will come *straight*."

Again, in the *Lover's Progress*, by Beaumont and Fletcher:

"*Lis.* Do you fight *straight*?

"*Clar.* Yes, presently."

Again, in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*:

"—we'll come and dress you *straight*."

Again, in *Othello*:

"Farewel, my Desdemona, I will come to thee *straight*." STEEVENS.

11. —*an act hath three branches; it is, to act, to do, and to perform.*] Ridicule on scholastick divisions without distinction; and of distinctions without difference. WARBURTON.

23. —*crowner's quest-law.*] I strongly suspect that this is a ridicule on the case of Dame Hales, reported by Plowden in his commentaries, as determined in 3 Eliz.

It seems her husband Sir James Hales had drowned himself in a river, and the question was, whether by this act a forfeiture of a lease from the dean and chapter of Canterbury, which he was possessed of, did

not accrue to the crown; an inquisition was found before the coroner, which found him *felo de se.* The legal and logical subtilties, arising in the course of the argument of this case, gave a very fair opportunity for a sneer at *crowner's quest-law.* The expression, a little before, that *an act hath three branches,* &c. is so pointed an allusion to the case I mention, that I cannot doubt but that Shakspere was acquainted with, and meant to laugh at it.

It may be added, that on this occasion a great deal of subtilty was used, to ascertain whether Sir James was the *agent* or the *patient*; or, in other words, whether *he went to the water, or the water came to him.* The cause of Sir James's madness was the circumstance of his having been the judge who condemned *Lady Jane Gray.* Sir J. HAWKINS.

29. —*their* even *Christian.*] So all the old books, and rightly. An old English expression for fellow-christian. THIRLBY.

So, in Chaucer's *Jack Upland:* "If freres cannot or mow not excuse 'hem of these questions asked of 'hem, it semeth that they be horrible giltie against God, and *ther even Christian,*" &c.

Again, in Gower, *De Confessione Amantis,* Lib. V. fol. 102.

"Of beautie sighe he never hir *even.*"

Again, Chaucer's *Persones Tale:* "—of his neighbour, that is to sayn, of his *even cristen,*" &c. STEEVENS.

35. 2 *Clown.*] This speech, and the next, as far as —*without arms,* is not in the quartos. STEEVENS.

53. *Ay, tell me that, and unyoke.*] If it be not sufficient to say, with Dr. Warburton, that this phrase might be taken from husbandry, without much depth of reading, we may produce it from a dittie of the workmen of Dover, preserved in the additions to Holinshed, p. 1546:

"My bow is broke, I would *unyoke*,
"My foot is sore, I can work no more."

FARMER.

Again, in Drayton's *Polyolbion*, at the end of Song I.

"Here I'll *unyoke* a while and turne my steeds
to meet."

Again, in P. Holland's Translation of Pliny's *Nat. Hist.* p. 593, "in the evening, and when thou dost *unyoke*." STEEVENS.

63. *In youth, when I did love*, &c.] The three stanzas, sung here by the grave-digger, are extracted, with a slight variation, from a little poem, called, *The aged Lover renounceth Love*, written by Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, who flourished in the reign of King Henry VIII. and who was beheaded in 1547, on a strained accusation of treason. THEOBALD.

The original poem from which this stanza is taken, like the other succeeding ones, is preserved among Lord Surrey's Poems; though as Dr. Percy has observed, it is attributed to Lord Vaux by George Gascoigne. See an epistle prefixed to one of his poems, printed with the rest of his works, 1575. By

 others

others it is supposed to have been written by Sir Thomas Wyatt.

" *I lothe that I did love;*
" *In youth that I thought sweet:*
" *As time requires, for my behove,*
" *Methinks they are not meete.*"

All these difficulties, however (says the Rev. Thomas Warton, in his *History of English Poetry*, Vol. III. p. 45), are at once adjusted by MS. Harl. 1703, 25, in the British Museum, in which we have a copy of Vaux's poem, beginning, *I lothe that I did love*, with the title, " A dyttye or sonnet made by the Lord Vaus, in the time of the noble Quene Marye, representing the image of death."

The entire song is published by Dr. Percy, in the first volume of his *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*.

STEEVENS.

76. *As if I had never been such.*] Thus in the original:

" *For age with stealing steps*
" *Hath clawde me with his crowch;*
" *And lusty youthe away he leapes,*
" *As there had bene none such.*" STEEVENS.

80. *—a politician—one that would circumvent God;*] This character is finely touched. Our great historian has well explained it in an example, where, speaking of the death of Cardinal Mazarine, at the time of the Restoration, he says, " The cardinal was probably struck with the wonder, if not the agony of that undream'd-of

dream'd-of prosperity of our king's affairs: as if he had taken it ill, and laid it to heart, that God Almighty would bring such a work to pass in Europe without his concurrence, and even against all his machinations." *History of Rebellion*, Book XVI.

WARBURTON.

86. *This might be my lord such-a-one, that prais'd my lord such-a-one's horse, when he meant to beg it;—*] So, in *Timon of Athens*, act i.

" —my lord, you gave
" Good words the other day of a bay courser
" I rode on; it is yours, because you lik'd it."

STEEVENS.

90. *—and now my lady worm's;*] The scull that was *my lord Such-a-one's* is now *my lady Worm's.*

JOHNSON.

94. *—play at loggats—*] A play, in which pins are set up to be beaten down with a bowl. JOHNSON.

—to play at loggats with 'em?—] This is a game played in several parts of England even at this time. A stake is fixed into the ground; those who play, throw *loggats* at it, and he that is nearest the stake, wins: I have seen it played in different counties at their sheep-shearing feasts, where the winner was entitled to a black fleece, which he afterwards presented to the farmer's maid to spin for the purpose of making a petticoat, and on condition she knelt down on the fleece to be kissed by all the rusticks present.

So Ben Jonson, *Tale of a Tub*, act iv. sc. 6.

" Now are they tossing his legs and arms,
" Like *loggats* at a pear-tree."

So in an old collection of epigrams, satires, &c.

" To play at *loggats*, nine holes, or ten pinnes."

Again, in Decker's *If this be not a good Play, the Devil is in It*, 1612:

" ——two hundred crowns!
" I've lost as much at *loggats*."

It is one of the unlawful games enumerated in the statute of 33 Henry VIII. STEEVENS.

A *loggat*-ground, like a skittle-ground, is strewed with ashes, but is more extensive; a bowl much larger than the jack at the game of bowls is thrown first. The pins, which I believe are called *loggats*, are much thinner, and higher at one extremity than the other. The bowl being first thrown, the players take the pins up by the thinner and lighter end, and fling them towards the bowl, and in such a manner that the pin may turn once round in the air, and slide with the thinner extremity foremost towards the bowl. The pins are about one or two and twenty inches long. BLOUNT.

99. *For such a guest is meet.*] Thus in the original.

" *A picke-axe and a spade,*
" *And eke a shrowding sheet;*
" *A house of clay for to be made,*
" *For such a guest most meet.*" STEEVENS.

101. ——*quiddits*, &c.] *i. e.* subtilties. So in *Soliman and Perseda*:

" I am

* *

"I am wise, but *quiddits* will not answer death."

STEEVENS.

104. —*the sconce*——] *i. e.* the head. STEEVENS.

108. *Is this the fine of his fines, and the recovery of his recoveries,*—] Omitted in the quartos. STEEVENS.

119. —assurance *in that.*—] A quibble is intended. Deeds, which are usually written on parchment, are called the common *assurances* of the kingdom.

MALONE.

140. —*by the* card,—] The *card* is a *sea-chart*, still so termed by mariners: and the word is afterwards used by Osrick in the same sense. Hamlet's meaning will therefore be, we must speak *directly forward, in a straight line*, plainly to the point.

REMARKS.

So, in *Macbeth:*

"And the very ports they blow, &c.

"On the shipman's *card.*" STEEVENS.

142. —*the age is grown so* picked,—] So *smart*, so *sharp*, says Hanmer, very properly; but there was, I think, about that time, a *picked* shoe, that is, *a shoe with a long pointed toe*, in fashion, to which the allusion seems likewise to be made. *Every man now is smart; and every man now is a man of fashion.*

JOHNSON.

This fashion of wearing shoes with long pointed toes was carried to such excess in England, that it was restrained at last by proclamation so long ago as the fifth year of Edward IV. when it was ordered, "that the beaks or pykes of shoes and boots should

not

not pass two inches, upon pain of cursing by the clergy, and forfeiting twenty shillings, to be paid one noble to the king, another to the cordwainers of London, and the third to the chamber of London;—and for other countries and towns the like order was taken.—Before this time, and since the year 1382, the pykes of shoes and boots were of such length, that they were fain to be tied up to the knee with chains of silver, and gilt, or at least with silken laces."

STEEVENS.

150. ——*that young Hamlet was born*;—] By this scene it appears that Hamlet was then thirty years old, and knew Yorick well, who had been dead twenty-two years. And yet in the beginning of the play he is spoken of as a *very young* man, one that designed to go back to school, *i. e.* to the university of Wittenberg. The poet in the fifth act had forgot what he wrote in the first. BLACKSTONE.

196. ——*my lady's* chamber,——] Thus the folio. The quartos read—my lady's *table*, meaning, I suppose, her *dressing-table*. STEEVENS.

219. —*winter's* flaw!] Winter's *blast*. JOHNSON.

So, in *Marius and Sylla*, 1594:

" —no doubt this stormy *flaw*,
" That Neptune sent to cast us on this shore."

The quartos read—to expel the *water's* flaw.

STEEVENS.

222. —*maimed rites!*——] Imperfect obsequies.

JOHNSON.

224.

224. Foredo *its own life.*] To *foredo*, is to undo, to destroy. So, in *Othello*:

"——this is the night
"That either makes me or *foredoes* me quite."

Again, in *Acolastus*, a comedy, 1529: "—wolde to God it might be leful for me to *fordoo* myself, or to make an ende of me!" STEEVENS.

230. *Priest.*] This *Priest* in the old quarto is called *Doctor*. STEEVENS.

230. *Her obsequies have been as far enlarg'd*
As we have warranty:—] Is there any allusion here to the coroner's warrant, directed to the minister and church-wardens of a parish, and permitting the body of a person, who comes to an untimely end, to receive Christian burial? WHALLEY.

236. —*allow'd her virgin* crants,] *Crants* is the German word for *garlands*, and suppose it was retained by us from the Saxons. To carry *garlands* before the bier of a *maiden*, and to hang them over her grave, is still the practice in rural parishes.

Crants therefore was the original word, which the author, discovering it to be provincial, and perhaps not understood, changed to a term more intelligible, but less proper. *Maiden rites* give no certain or definite image. He might have put *maiden wreaths*, or *maiden garlands*, but he perhaps bestowed no thought upon it, and neither genius nor practice will always supply a hasty writer with the most proper diction.

JOHNSON.

In

In Minshew's *Dictionary*, see *Beades*, where *roosen krants* means *sertum rosarium*; and such is the name of a character in this play. TOLLET.

238. *Of bell and burial.*] *Burial*, here, signifies interment in consecrated ground. WARBURTON.

242. *To sing a* Requiem,] A *Requiem* is a mass performed in Popish churches for the rest of the soul of a person deceased. The folio reads—sing *sage* requiem. STEEVENS.

288. *Woo't drink up* Esil! *eat a crocodile?*] This word has through all the editions been distinguished by Italick characters, as if it were the proper name of some river; and so, I dare say, all the editors have from time to time understood it to be. But then this must be some river in Denmark; and there is none there so called; nor is there any near it in name, that I know of but *Yssel*, from which the province of Overyssel derives its title in the German Flanders. Besides, Hamlet is not proposing any impossibilities to Laertes, as the drinking up a river would be: but he rather seems to mean, Wilt thou resolve to do things the most shocking and distasteful to human nature; and, behold, I am as resolute. I am persuaded the poet wrote:

Wilt drink up Eisel? *eat a crocodile?*

i. e. Wilt thou swallow down large draughts of *vinegar?* The proposition, indeed, is not very grand: but the doing it might be as distasteful and unsavoury as eating the flesh of a *crocodile*. And now there is neither an impossibility, nor an anticlimax: and the lowness

lowness of the idea is in some measure removed by the uncommon term. THEOBALD.

Hanmer has,

Wilt drink up Nile? *or eat a crocodile?*

Hamlet certainly meant (for he says he will rant) to dare Laertes to attempt any thing, however difficult or unnatural; and might safely promise to follow the example his antagonist was to set, in draining the channel of a river, or trying his teeth on an animal, whose scales are supposed to be impenetrable. Had Shakspere meant to make Hamlet say—*Wilt thou drink vinegar?* he probably would not have used the term *drink up*; which means, *totally to exhaust*; neither is that challenge very magnificent, which only provokes an adversary to hazard a fit of the heart-burn or the cholic.

The commentator's *Yssel* would serve Hamlet's turn or mine. This river is twice mentioned by Stowe, p. 735. "It standeth a good distance from the river *Issell*, but hath a sconce on *Issel* of incredible strength."

Again, by Drayton, in the 24th Song of his *Polyolbion*:

"The one *O'er Isell's* banks the ancient Saxons taught;
"At *Over Isell* rest, the other did apply."

And, in *K. Richard II.* a thought in part the same, occurs, act ii. sc. 2.

"——the task he undertakes
"Is numb'ring sands, and *drinking oceans dry*."

But

But in an old Latin account of Denmark and the neighbouring provinces, I find the names of several rivers little differing from *Esil*, or *Eisill*, in spelling or pronunciation. Such are the *Essa*, the *Oesil*, and some others. The word, like many more, may indeed be irrecoverably corrupted; but I must add, that no authors later than Chaucer or Skelton make use of *eysel* for *vinegar*: nor has Shakspere employed it in any other of his plays. The poet might have written the *Weisel*, a considerable river which falls into the Baltick ocean, and could not be unknown to any prince of Denmark. STEEVENS.

Mr. Steevens appears to have forgot our author's 111th sonnet:

"I will drinke
"Potions of *Eysell.*"

I believe it has not been observed that many of these sonnets are addressed to his beloved nephew *William Harte*. FARMER.

I have since observed, that *Mandeville* has the same word. STEEVENS.

Why should Mr. Steevens object to the authority of Chaucer and Skelton for the use of this word, and yet adduce them to authenticate the sense of others? Surely the following passage from the latter of these Poets, together with the other instances subjoined, must put the meaning beyond all question:

"Christe by crueltie
"Was nayled upon a tree
"He pay`d a bitter pencion

"For

" For mans redemption
" He drank *eisel* and gall
" To redeme us withall."

Again, in the *Customs of London*: "—Item in the chyrche of saynt crucis there is a chambre or a chappell within that pope sylvestre named Jherusalem there is the bonde that Chryste was led with to his crucyfyeng and there ben ii. sausers the one is full of Ihesus bloode and the other is ful of our ladyes melke and the sponge wherein was mengyth *eysell* and gall."

HENLEY.

297. *Queen.*] This speech in the 1st and 2d folio is given to the king. MALONE.

300. When *that her golden couplets*—] We should read, E'er *that*—for it is the patience of birds, during the time of incubation, that is here spoken of. The pigeon generally sits upon two eggs; and her young, when first disclosed, are covered with a yellow down.

WARBURTON.

Perhaps it should be,

Ere yet———

Yet and *that* are easily confounded. JOHNSON.

To *disclose* was anciently used for to *hatch*. So, in the *Booke of Huntyng, Hawkyng, Fyshyng*, &c. bl. let. no date: "First they ben eges; and after they ben *disclosed*, haukes; and commonly goshaukes ben *disclosed* as some as the choughes." To *exclude* is the technical term at present. I believe neither commentator has rightly explained this image. During three days after the pigeon has *hatched* her *couplets* (for she lays

lays no more than *two* eggs) she never quits her nest, except for a few moments in quest of a little food for herself; as all her young require in that early state, is to be kept warm, an office which she never entrusts to the male. STEEVENS.

Probably, in the manuscript, *yt* might have been indiscriminately used for both *yet* and *that*. HENLEY.

312. —*shortly*] The second and third quartos read, *thereby*. Perhaps rightly. STEEVENS.

314. Ham. *So much for this sir*, &c.] *The Hystorie of Hamblet*, bl. let. furnished our author with the scheme of sending the prince to England, and with most of the circumstances described in this scene.

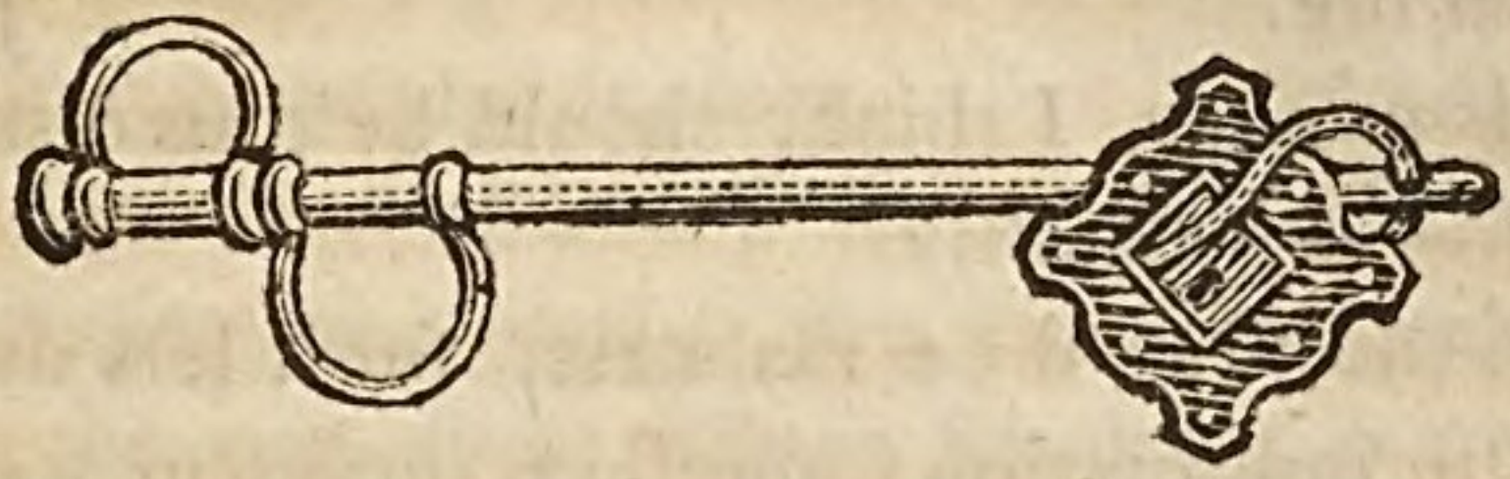
MALONE.

319. —mutines *in the bilboes*,——] *Mutines*, the French word for seditious or disobedient fellows in the army or fleet. *Bilboes* the *ship's prison*.

JOHNSON.

The *bilboes* is a bar of iron with fetters annexed to it, by which mutinous or disorderly sailors were anciently linked together. The word is derived from *Bilboa*, a place in Spain, where instruments of steel were fabricated in the utmost perfection. To understand Shakspere's allusion completely, it should be known, that as these fetters connect the legs of the offenders very close together, their attempts to rest must be as fruitless as those of Hamlet, in whose mind *there was a kind of fighting that would not let him sleep*. Every motion of one must disturb his partner in confinement. The *bilboes* are still shewn in the

Tower of London, among the other spoils of the Spanish Armada. The following is the figure of them.



STEEVENS.

319. ——*Rashly,*
And prais'd be rashness for it—Let us know,
Our *indiscretion sometimes serves us well,*
When, &c.] The sense in this reading is, *Our rashness lets us know that our indiscretion serves us well, when,* &c. But this could never be Shakspere's sense. We should read and point thus:

——*Rashness*
(And prais'd be rashness for it) lets us know;
Or *indiscretion sometimes serves us well,*
When, &c.] *i. e.* Rashness acquaints us with what we cannot penetrate to by plots. WARBURTON.

Both my copies read,

——Rashly,
And prais'd be rashness for it, let *us know.*

Hamlet, delivering an account of his escape, begins with saying, That he *rashly*——and then is carried into a reflection upon the weakness of human wisdom. I rashly——praised be rashness for it——*Let us* not think these events casual, but *let us know,* that is, *take notice and remember,* that we sometimes succeed by *indiscretion,* when we *fail* by *deep plots,* and infer the perpetual superintendance and *agency* of the *Divi-*

nity. The observation is just, and will be allowed by every human being who shall reflect on the course of his own life. JOHNSON.

This passage, I think, should be thus distributed:

———Rashly
(And prais'd be rashness, for it lets us know,
Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well,
When our deep plots do fail; and that should
teach us,
There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough hew them how we will;—
Hor. That is most certain —)
Ham. Up from my cabin, &c.] So that *rashly* may be joined in construction with *in the dark grop'd I to find out them.* TYRWHITT.

322. *When our* deep *plots do* fail:——] The folio reads—When our *dear* plots do *paule.* MALONE.

323. *There's a divinity that* shapes our ends,
Rough-hew *them how we will.*] Dr. Farmer informs me, that these words are merely technical. A wool-man, butcher, and dealer in *skewers*, lately observed to him that his nephew (an idle lad) could only *assist* him in making them; "——he could *rough-hew* them, but I was obliged to *shape their ends.*" Whoever recollects the profession of Shakspere's father, will admit that his son might be no stranger to such a term. I have seen packages of wool pinn'd up with *skewers.* STEEVENS.

336. *With, ho! such bugs and goblins in my life;*]
With *such causes of terror,* rising from my character
designs. JOHNSON.

A *bug*

A *bug* was no less a terrifick being than a goblin. So, in Spenser's *Faery Queen*, B. II. c. 3.

" As ghastly *bug* their haire on end does reare."

We call it at present a *bugbear*. STEEVENS.

337. —*no leisure* bated,] *Bated*, for *allowed*. To *abate*, signifies to *deduct*; this deduction, when applied to the person in whose favour it is made, is called an *allowance*. Hence he takes the liberty of using *bated* for *allowed*. WARBURTON.

344. *Being thus benetted round with villains,*
Ere I could make *a prologue to my* brains,
They had begun the play;—] Hamlet is telling how luckily every thing fell out; he groped out their commission in the dark without waking them; he found himself doomed to immediate destruction. Something was to be done for his preservation. An expedient occurred, not produced by the comparison of one method with another, or by a regular deduction of consequences, but before he *could make a prologue to his brains, they had begun the play*. Before he could summon his faculties, and propose to himself what should be done, a complete scheme of action presented itself to him. His mind operated before he had excited it. This appears to me to be the meaning. JOHNSON.

348. —*as our* statists *do*,] A *statist* is a *statesman*. So, in Shirley's *Humourous Courtier*, 1640:

" —that he is wise, a *statist*."

Again, in Ben Jonson's *Magnetic Lady*:

" Will screw you out a secret from a *statist*."

STEEVENS.

Most of the great men of Shakspere's time, whose autographs have been preserved, wrote very bad hands; their secretaries very neat ones.

BLACKSTONE.

357. *As peace should still her wheaten garland wear,*
And stand a comma *'tween their amities*;]
Peace is here properly and finely personalized as the goddess of good league and friendship; and very classically dressed out. Ovid says,

"*Pax cererum nutrit, Pacis alumna Ceres.*"

And Tibullus,

"*At nobis,* Pax *alma! veni,* spicam*que teneto.*"

WARBURTON.

The *comma* is the note of *connection* and continuity of sentences; the *period* is the note of *abruption* and disjunction. Shakspere had it perhaps in his mind to write, That unless England complied with the mandate, *war should put a* period *to their amity*; he altered his mode of diction, and thought that, in an opposite sense, he might put, that *Peace should stand a* comma *between their amities.* This is not an easy style; but is it not the style of Shakspere? JOHNSON.

370. *The* changeling *never known*:—] A *changeling* is a *child* which the fairies are supposed to leave in the room of that which they steal. JOHNSON.

374. *Why, man,* &c.] This line is omitted in the quartos. STEEVENS.

376. *Doth by their own* insinuation *grow*:] *Insinuation,* for corruptly obtruding themselves into his service. WARBURTON.

386.

386. *To quit him*—] To requite him; to pay him his due. JOHNSON.

This passage, as well as the three following speeches, is not in the quartos. STEEVENS.

396. *I'll* count *his favours*:] Thus the folio. I'll *count* his favours is—*I will make account* of them, *i. e. reckon upon them, value them.* STEEVENS.

401. —*Dost know this water-fly?*] A *water-fly* skips up and down upon the surface of the water, without any apparent purpose or reason, and is thence the proper emblem of a busy trifler. JOHNSON.

407. —*'Tis a chough*;—] A kind of jackdaw. JOHNSON.

417. *But yet, methinks, it is very sultry*, &c.] Hamlet is here playing over the same face with Osrick, which he had formerly done with Polonius. STEEVENS.

418. —or *my complexion*——] The folio reads—*for* my complexion. STEEVENS.

425. *Sir*, &c.] The folio omits this and the following fourteen speeches; and in their place substitutes only, *Sir, you are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes is at his weapon.* STEEVENS.

426. —*full of most excellent differences*,—] Full of *distinguishing* excellencies. JOHNSON.

428. —*speak* feelingly——] The first quarto reads, *sellingly*. STEEVENS.

429. —*the* card *or* calender *of gentry*;——] The general preceptor of elegance; the *card* by which a gentleman is to direct his course; the *calendar* by which

which he is to choose his time, that what he does may be both excellent and seasonable. JOHNSON.

429. —*for you shall find in him the continent of what part a gentleman would see.*] *You shall find him containing* and comprising, every *quality* which a *gentleman* would desire to *contemplate* for imitation, I know not but it should be read, *You shall find him the continent.* JOHNSON.

432. *Sir, his definement,* &c.] This is designed as a specimen, and ridicule of the court-jargon amongst the *precieux* of that time. The sense in English is, "Sir, he suffers nothing in your account of him, though to enumerate his good qualities particularly would be endless; yet when we had done our best, it would still come short of him. However, in strictness of truth, he is a great genius, and of a character so rarely to be met with, that to find any thing like him we must look into his mirrour, and his imitators will appear no more than his shadows." WARBURTON.

434. —*and yet but* raw *neither,*—] *Raw* signifies *unripe, immature,* thence *unformed, imperfect, unskilful.* The best account of him would be *imperfect,* in respect of his quick sail. The phrase *quick sail* was, I suppose, a proverbial term for *activity of mind.* JOHNSON.

436. ——*a soul of great* article;—] This is obscure. I suppose, *a soul of great article,* means *a soul of large* comprehension, of many contents; the particulars of an inventory, are called *articles.* JOHNSON.

437.

437. ——*of such dearth*—] *Dearth* is *dearness*, value, price. And his internal qualities of such value and rarity. JOHNSON.

445. *Is't not possible to understand in another tongue? you will do't, sir, really.*] Of this interrogatory remark, the sense is very obscure. The question may mean, *Might not all this be understood in plainer language?* But then, *you will do it, sir, really*, seems to have no use, for who could doubt but plain language would be intelligible? I would therefore read, *Is't possible* not to be understood in a mother *tongue?* You will do it, sir, really. JOHNSON.

Suppose we were to point the passage thus: Is't not possible to understand? In another tongue you will do it, sir, really.

The speech seems to be addressed to *Osrick*, who is puzzled by Hamlet's imitation of his own affected language. STEEVENS.

453. —*if you did*——*it would not much* approve *me.*] If you knew I was not ignorant, your esteem would not much advance my reputation. To *approve* is to *recommend to approbation.* JOHNSON.

457. *I dare not confess that, lest I should compare with him*, &c.] I dare not pretend to know him, lest I should pretend to an equality: no man can completely know another, but by knowing himself, which is the utmost extent of human wisdom. JOHNSON.

462. —*in his meed*—] In his excellence. JOHNSON.

468. —*impon'd*—] To *impone* means to put down, to stake, from the verb *impono*. REMARKS.

470. —*hangers*,——] It appears from several old plays, that what was called a *Case of Hangers*, was anciently worn. So, in the *Birth of Merlin*, 1662:

"He has a fair sword, but his *hangers* are fallen."

Again,

"He has a feather, and fair *hangers* too."

Again, in *Rhodon and Iris*, 1631:

"———a rapier

"Hatch'd with gold, with hilt and *hangers* of the new fashion." STEEVENS.

475. —*you must be edified by the* margent,—] Dr. Warburton very properly observes, that in the old books the gloss or comment was usually printed on the margent of the leaf. So, in Decker's *Honest Whore*, Part II. 1630:

"—I read

"Strange comments in those *margins* of your looks."

This speech is omitted in the folio. STEEVENS.

478. —*more germane*—] More *a-kin*. JOHNSON.

485. *The king, sir, hath laid*—] This wager I do not understand. In a dozen passes one must exceed the other more or less than three hits. Nor can I comprehend how, in a dozen, there can be twelve to nine. The passage is of no importance; it is sufficient that there was a wager. The quarto has the

passage

passage as it stands. The folio, *He hath one twelve for mine.* JOHNSON.

505. *This lapwing runs away with the shell on his head.*] I see no particular propriety in the image of the lapwing. Osrick did not run till he had done his business. We may read, *This lapwing* ran *away*—That is, *this fellow was full of unimportant bustle from his birth.* JOHNSON.

The same image occurs in Ben Jonson's *Staple of News*:

" ——and coachmen
" To mount their boxes reverently, and drive
" Like *lapwings with a shell upon their heads*
" Thorough the streets."

And I have since met with it in several other plays. The meaning, I believe, is—This is a *forward* fellow. So, in *Vittoria Corombona*, or the *White Devil*, 1612:

" —*Forward* lapwing,
" He flies with the shell on's head."

Again, in *Greene's Never too late*, 1616: " Are you no sooner hatched, with the *lapwing*, but you will run away with *the shell on your head?*"

Again, in *Revenge for Honour*, by Chapman:

" Boldness enforces youth to hard achievements
" Before their time; makes them run forth like
lapwings
" From their warm nest, part of the *shell yet*
sticking
" Unto their downy heads." STEEVENS.

509. —*the same* breed,——] It is *beavy* in the first folio,

folio, and there may be a propriety in it, as he has just called him a *lapwing*. TOLLET.

—*and* many *more of the same* breed.] The first folio has—*and* mine *more of the same* beavy. The second folio—*and* nine *more*, &c. Perhaps the last is the true reading. STEEVENS.

510. —outward *habit of encounter*;——] Thus the folio. The quartos read—*out of an* habit of encounter. STEEVENS.

Outward habit of encounter—*i. e.* exterior politeness of address; in allusion to Osrick's last speech. HENLEY.

511. —*a kind of* yesty *collection, which carries them through and through the most* fond *and winnowed opinions; and do but blow them to their trial, the bubbles are out.*] The metaphor is strangely mangled by the intrusion of the word *fond*, which undoubtedly should be read *fann'd*; the allusion being to corn separated by the fan from chaff and dust. But the editors seeing from the character of this *yesty collection*, that the *opinions*, through which they were so currently *carried*, were false opinions; and *fann'd and winnow'd opinions*, in the most obvious sense, signifying *tried and purified* opinions; they thought *fann'd* must needs be wrong, and therefore made it *fond*, which word signified, in our author's time, foolish, weak, or childish. They did not consider that *fann'd and winnow'd opinions* had also a different signification: for it may mean the opinions of great men and courtiers, men separated by their quality from the vulgar, as corn is separated from chaff. This *yesty collection*, says Hamlet, insinuates itself into people of the highest quality, as

yest into the finest flour. The courtiers admire him, when he comes to the trial, &c. WARBURTON.

This is a very happy emendation; but I know not why the critick should suppose that *fond* was printed for *fann'd* in consequence of any reason or reflection. Such errors, to which there is no temptation but idleness, and of which there was no cause but ignorance, are in every page of the old editions. This passage in the quarto stands thus: "They have got out of the habit of encounter, a kind of misty collection, which carries them through and through the most profane and trennowned opinions." If this printer preserved any traces of the original, our author wrote, "the most sane and renowned opinions," which is better than fann'd and winnow'd.

The meaning is, "these men have got the cant of the day, a superficial readiness of slight and cursory conversation, a kind of frothy collection of fashionable prattle, which yet carried them through the most select and approving judgments. This airy facility of talk sometimes imposes upon wise men."

Who has not seen this observation verified?

JOHNSON.

Fond is evidently opposed to *winnowed*. *Fond*, in the language of Shakspere's age, signified *foolish*. So, in *The Merchant of Venice*:

"Thou naughty jailer, why art thou so *fond*?"

&c.

Winnowed is *sifted, examined*. The sense is then, that their conversation was yet successful enough to make

them passable not only with the weak, but with those of sounder judgment. The same opposition in terms is visible in the reading which the quartos offer. *Profane* or *vulgar*, is opposed to *trenowned*, or *thrice renowned*. STEEVENS.

513. —*do but blow them*, &c.] These men of show, without solidity, are like bubbles raised from soap and water, which dance, and glitter, and please the eye, but if you extend them, by blowing hard, separate into a mist; so if you oblige these specious talkers to extend their compass of conversation, they at once discover the tenuity of their intellects. JOHNSON.

515. *My* lord, &c.] All that passes between *Hamlet* and this *Lord* is omitted in the folio. STEEVENS.

527. —*gentle entertainment*—] Mild and temperate conversation. JOHNSON.

536. —*a kind of* gain-giving——] *Gain-giving* is the same as *mis-giving*. STEEVENS.

538. *If your mind dislike any thing, obey it:*——] With the presages of future evils arising in the mind, the poet has forerun many events which are to happen at the conclusions of his plays; and sometimes so particularly, that even the circumstances of calamity are minutely hinted at, as in the instance of Juliet, who tells her lover from the window, that he appears *like one dead in the bottom of a tomb*. The supposition that the genius of the mind gave the alarm before approaching dissolution, is a very ancient one, and perhaps can never be totally driven out: yet it must be allowed the merit of adding beauty to poetry, however

ever injurious it may sometimes prove to the weak and the superstitious. STEEVENS.

561. *Sir*, &c.] This passage I have restored from the folio. STEEVENS.

566. *I am satisfied in* nature, &c.] This was a piece of satire on fantastical honour. Though *nature* is satisfied, yet he will ask advice of older men of the sword, whether *artificial honour* ought to be contented with Hamlet's submission.

There is a passage somewhat similar in the *Maid's Tragedy:*

"*Evad.* Will you forgive me then?

"*Mel.* Stay, I must *ask mine honour* first."

STEEVENS.

570. *'Till by some* elder masters, *of known honour,*] This is said in allusion to English custom. I learn from an ancient MS. of which the reader will find a more particular account in a note to the *Merry Wives of Windsor*, Vol. I. p. 260, that in queen Elizabeth's time there were "four *ancient masters* of defence," in the city of London. They appear to have been the referees in many affairs of honour, and exacted tribute from all inferior practitioners of the art of fencing, &c. STEEVENS.

593. —*the* stoups *of wine*——] A *stoup* is a *flaggon*, or *bowl.* STEEVENS.

598. *And in the cup an* union *shall he throw,*] In some editions,

And in the cup an onyx *shall he throw.*

This is a various reading in several of the old copies; but *union* seems to me to be the true word. If I am not mistaken, neither the *onyx*, nor *sardonyx*, are jewels which ever found place in an imperial crown. An *union* is the finest sort of pearl, and has its place in all crowns, and coronets. Besides, let us consider what the king says on Hamlet's giving Laertes the first hit:

Stay, give me drink. Hamlet, this pearl *is thine;*
Here's to thy health.

Therefore, if an *union* be a *pearl*, and an *onyx* a gem, or stone, quite differing in its nature from *pearls*; the king saying, that Hamlet has earn'd the *pearl*, I think, amounts to a demonstration that it was an *union* pearl, which he meant to throw into the cup.

THEOBALD.

So, in *Soliman and Perseda*:

"Ay, were it Cleopatra's *union*."

The *union* is thus mentioned in P. Holland's translation of Pliny's *Natural History*. "And hereupon it is that our dainties and delicates here at Rome, &c. call them *unions*, as a man would say singular and by themselves alone."

To swallow a *pearl* in a draught seems to have been equally common to royal and mercantile prodigality. So, in the second part of *If you know not Me, you know No Body*, 1606, Sir Thomas Gresham says:

"Here 16,000 pound at one clap goes.
"Instead of sugar, Gresham *drinks this pearle*
"Unto his queen and mistress." STEEVENS.

613.

613. —*this* pearl *is thine*;] Under pretence of throwing a *pearl* into the cup, the king may be supposed to drop some poisonous drug into the wine. Hamlet seems to suspect this, when he afterwards discovers the effects of the poison, and tauntingly asks him,

—*Is the* union *here?* STEEVENS.

619. Queen. *He's* fat, *and scant of breath.*] It seems that *John Lowin*, who was the original *Falstaff*, was no less celebrated for his performance of *Henry VIII.* and *Hamlet*. See the *Historia Histrionica*, &c. If he was adapted, by the corpulence of his figure, to appear with propriety in the two former of these characters, Shakspere might have put this observation in the mouth of her majesty, to apologize for the want of such elegance of person as an audience might expect to meet with in the representative of the youthful Prince of Denmark, whom Ophelia speaks of as "the glass of fashion and the mould of form." This, however, is mere conjecture, as *Joseph Taylor* likewise acted *Hamlet* during the life of Shakspere.

STEEVENS.

621. *The queen* carouses *to thy fortune, Hamlet.*] So, in *David and Bethsabe*, 1599:

"With full *carouses* to his fortune past."

"And bind that promise with a full *carouse*." Ib.

"Now, lord Urias, one *carouse* to me." Ibid.

STEEVENS.

633. —*you make a* wanton *of me.*] *i. e.* you trifle with me as if you were playing with a child.

So, in *Romeo and Juliet*:

" I would have thee gone,
" And yet no further than a *wanton*'s bird,
" That lets it hop a little from her hand,
" And with a silk thread pulls it back again."

REMARKS.

663. *Is the* union *here?*] In this place likewise the quarto reads, an *onyx*. STEEVENS.

673. *That are but mutes or audience to this act,*] That are either mere *auditors* of this *catastrophe*, or at most only *mute performers*, that fill the stage without any part in the action. JOHNSON.

685. —*shall* live *behind me?*] Thus the folio. The quartos read shall *I leave* behind me. STEEVENS.

695. *The potent poison quite* o'er-grows *my spirits*;] The first quarto and the first folio read,

————*o'er-crows* my spirit;

alluding perhaps to a victorious cock exulting over his conquered antagonist. The same word occurs in *Lingua*, &c. 1607:

" Shall I? th' embassadress of gods and men,
" That pull'd proud Phœbe from her brightsome sphere,
" And dark'd Apollo's countenance with a word,
" Be *over-crow'd*, and breathe without revenge?"

Again, in *Hall's Satires*, lib. v. sat. ii.

" Like the vain bubble of Iberian pride,
" That *over-croweth* all the world beside."

This phrase often occurs in the controversial pieces of Gabriel Harvey, 1593, &c. STEEVENS.

699.

699. —*the* occurrents—] *i. e.* incidents. The word is now disused. So, in *The Hog hath lost his Pearl*, 1614:

"Such strange *occurrents* of my fore-past life."

Again, in the *Baron's Wars*, by *Drayton*, Canto I.

"With each *occurrent* right in his degree."

STEEVENS.

700. *Which have* solicited,—] *Solicited*, for brought on the event. WARBURTON.

701. *Now cracks a noble heart:—Good night, sweet prince;*

And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest!]

Let us review for a moment the behaviour of Hamlet, on the strength of which Horatio founds this eulogy, and recommends him to the patronage of angels.

Hamlet, at the command of his father's ghost, undertakes with seeming alacrity to revenge the murder; and declares he will banish all other thoughts from his mind. He makes, however, but one effort to keep his word, and that is, when he mistakes Polonius for the king. On another occasion, he defers his purpose till he can find an opportunity of taking his uncle when he is least prepared for death, that he may insure damnation to his soul. Though he assassinated Polonius by accident, yet he deliberately procures the execution of his school-fellows, Rosencrantz and Guieldenstern, who appear to have been unacquainted with the treacherous purposes of the mandate which they were employed to carry. Their death (as he declares in a subsequent conversation with Horatio)

gives

gives him no concern, for they obtruded themselves into the service, and he thought he had a right to destroy them. He is not less accountable for the distraction and death of Ophelia. He comes to interrupt the funeral designed in honour of this lady, at which both the king and queen were present; and, by such an outrage to decency, renders it still more necessary for the usurper to lay a second stratagem for his life, though the first had proved abortive. He comes to insult the brother of the dead, and to boast of an affection for his sister, which, before, he had denied to her face; and yet at this very time must be considered as desirous of supporting the character of a madman, so that the openness of his confession is not to be imputed to him as a virtue. He apologizes to Horatio afterwards for the absurdity of this behaviour, to which, he says, he was provoked by that nobleness of fraternal grief, which, indeed, he ought rather to have applauded than condemned. Dr. Johnson has observed, that to bring about a reconciliation with Laertes, he has availed himself of a dishonest fallacy; and to conclude, it is obvious to the most careless spectator or reader, that he kills the king at last to revenge himself, and not his father.

Hamlet cannot be said to have pursued his ends by very warrantable means; and if the poet, when he sacrificed him at last, meant to have enforced such a moral, it is not the worst that can be deduced from the play; for, as *Maximus*, in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Valentinian*, says,

"Although

" Although his justice were as white as truth,
" His way was crooked to it; that condemns him."

The late Dr. Akenside once observed to me, that the conduct of Hamlet was every way unnatural and indefensible, unless he were to be regarded as a young man whose intellects were in some degree impaired by his own misfortunes; by the death of his father, the loss of expected sovereignty, and a sense of shame resulting from the hasty and incestuous marriage of his mother.

I have dwelt the longer on this subject, because Hamlet seems to have been hitherto regarded as a hero not undeserving the pity of the audience; and because no writer on Shakspere has taken the pains to point out the immoral tendency of his character.

STEEVENS.

See REMARKS, p. 217, to 224, in opposition to these strictures. REED.

707. *This quarry cries, on havock!*——] To *cry on*, was to *exclaim against*. I suppose, when unfair sportsmen destroyed more *quarry* or *game* than was reasonable, the censure was to cry, *Havock*. JOHNSON.

708. *What* feast *is toward in thine infernal cell,*] Shakspere has already employed this allusion to the *Choæ*, or *feasts of the dead*, which were anciently celebrated at Athens, and are mentioned by Plutarch in the life of *Antoninus*. Our author likewise makes *Talbot* say to his son in the First Part of *King Henry VI.*

. " Now

"Now art thou come unto a *feast of death.*"

STEEVENS.

717. —*his mouth,*] *i. e.* the king's. STEEVENS.

726. *Of* cruel, &c.] The first quarto, and the folio, read—Of *carnal.* COLLINS.

Carnal is, without doubt, the true reading. The word is used by Shakspere as an adjective to *carnage.* REMARKS.

728. —*and* forc'd *cause*;] Thus the folio. The quartos read—and *for no* cause. STEEVENS.

* * * * * *

The first remark of Voltaire on this tragedy, is, that the former king had been poisoned by his brother and *his queen.* The guilt of the latter, however, is far from being ascertained. The Ghost forbears to accuse her as an accessary, and very forcibly recommends her to the mercy of her son. I may add, that her conscience appears undisturbed during the exhibition of the mock tragedy, which produces so visible a disorder in her husband who was really criminal. The last observation of the same author has no greater degree of veracity to boast of; for now, says he, all the actors in the piece are swept away, and one Monsieur Fortenbras is introduced to conclude it. Can this be true, when Horatio, Osrick, Voltimand, and Cornelius survive? These, together with the whole court of Denmark, are supposed to be present at the catastrophe, so that we are not indebted to the Norwegian

Norwegian chief for having kept the stage from vacancy.

Monsieur de Voltaire has since transmitted, in an epistle to the Academy of Belles Lettres, some remarks on the late French translation of Shakspere; but alas! no traces of genius or vigour are discoverable in this *crambe repetita*, which is notorious only for its insipidity, fallacy, and malice. It serves indeed to shew an apparent decline of talents and spirit in its writer, who no longer relies on his own ability to depreciate a rival, but appeals in a plaintive strain to the queen and princes of France for their assistance to stop the farther circulation of Shakspere's renown.

Impartiality, nevertheless, must acknowledge, that his private correspondence displays a superior degree of animation. Perhaps an ague shook him when he appealed to the publick on this subject; but the effects of a fever seem to predominate in his subsequent letter to Monsieur D'Argenteuil on the same occasion; for such a letter it is as our John Dennis (while his frenzy lasted) might be supposed to have written. "C'est moi qui autrefois parlai le premier de ce Shakspere: c'est moi qui le premier montrai aux François quelques perles quels j'avois trouvé dans son enorme *fumier*." Mrs. Montague, the justly celebrated authoress of the *Essay on the genius and writings* of our author, was at Paris, and in the circle where these ravings of the Frenchman were first publickly recited. On hearing the illiberal expression already quoted, with no less elegance than readiness she replied—

"C'est

"C'est un *fumier* qui a fertilizé une terre bien ingrate."—In short the author of *Zayre*, *Mahomet*, and *Semiramis*, possesses all the mischievous qualities of a midnight felon, who, in the hope to conceal his guilt, sets the house he has robbed on fire.

As for Messieurs D'Alembert and Marmontel, they might safely be passed over with that neglect which their impotence of criticism deserves. Voltaire, in spite of his natural disposition to vilify an English poet, by adopting sentiments, characters, and situations from Shakspere, has bestowed on him involuntary praise. Happily, he has not been disgraced by the worthless encomiums or disfigured by the awkward imitations of the other pair, who "follow in the chace not like hounds that hunt, but like those who fill up the cry." When D'Alembert declares that more sterling sense is to be met with in ten French verses than in thirty English ones, contempt is all that he provokes,—such contempt as can only be exceeded by that which every scholar will express, who may chance to look into the prose translation of Lucan by Marmontel, with the vain expectation of discovering either the sense, the spirit, or the whole of the original.

STEEVENS.

THE END.

ANNOTATIONS

BY

SAM. JOHNSON & GEO. STEEVENS,

AND

THE VARIOUS COMMENTATORS,

UPON

TITUS ANDRONICUS,

WRITTEN BY

WILL. SHAKSPERE.

——SIC ITUR AD ASTRA.

VIRG.

LONDON:

Printed for, and under the Direction of,

JOHN BELL, British-Library, STRAND,

Bookseller to His Royal Highness the PRINCE of WALES.

M DCC LXXXVII.

ANNOTATIONS

UPON

TITUS ANDRONICUS.

ACT I.

Line 70. *HAIL, Rome, victorious in* thy *mourning weeds!*] We may suppose the Romans in a grateful ceremony, meeting the dead sons of Andronicus with mournful habits. JOHNSON.

Or that they were in mourning for their emperor, who was just dead. STEEVENS.

77. *Thou great defender of this Capitol,*] Jupiter, to whom the Capitol was sacred. JOHNSON.

101. *Nor we disturb'd by prodigies on earth.*] It was supposed by the ancients, that the ghosts of unburied

 people

people appeared to their friends and relations, to solicit the rites of funeral. STEEVENS.

117. *Wilt thou draw near the nature of the gods?*

Draw near them then in being merciful:] Homines enim ad deos nulla re propius accedunt, quam salutem hominibus dando." *Cicero pro Ligario.*

From this passage Mr. Whalley infers the learning of Shakspere, but our author might have found a translation of it in *England's Parnassus.* STEEVENS.

121. Patient *yourself*, &c.] This verb is used by other dramatick writers. So, in *Arden of Feversham*, 1592:

" *Patient* yourself, we cannot help it now."

Again, in *K. Edward I.* 1599:

" *Patient* your highness, 'tis but mother's love."

STEEVENS.

136. *The self same gods, that arm'd the queen of Troy*
With opportunity of sharp revenge
Upon the Thracian tyrant in his *tent*, &c.] I read, against the authority of all the copies:

———*in* her *tent.*

i. e. in the tent where she and the other Trojan captive women were kept; for thither Hecuba by a wile had decoyed Polymnestor, in order to perpetrate her revenge. This we may learn from Euripides' *Hecuba*; the only author, that I can at present remember, from whom our writer must have gleaned this circumstance. THEOBALD.

The writer of the play, whoever he was, might have been misled by the passage in *Ovid*: Metam. xiii.

" —vadit

"—vadit ad *artificem*," and therefore took it for granted that she found him in *his tent*. STEEVENS.

168. *And fame's eternal date, for virtue's praise!*] To *outlive* an *eternal date*, is, though not philosophical, yet poetical sense. He wishes that her life may be longer than his, and her praise longer than fame. JOHNSON.

189. ——don *this robe*, &c.] i. e. *do on* this robe, put it on. STEEVENS.

272. Lav. *Not I, my lord*;——] It was pity to part a couple who seem to have corresponded in disposition so exactly as Saturninus and Lavinia. Saturninus, who has just promised to espouse her, already wishes he were to choose again; and she who was engaged to Bassianus (whom she afterwards marries) expresses no reluctance when her father gives her to Saturninus. Her subsequent raillery to Tamora is of so coarse a nature, that if her tongue had been all she was condemned to lose, perhaps the author (whoever he was) might have escaped censure on the score of poetick justice. STEEVENS.

313. ——*changing-piece*,] Spoken of Lavinia. *Piece* was then, as it is now, used personally as a word of contempt. JOHNSON.

So in *Britania's Pastorals* by Brown, 1613:

"——her husband, weaken'd *piece*,
"Must have his cullis mix'd with ambergrease:
"Phesant and partridge into jelly turn'd,
"Grated with gold." STEEVENS.

317. *To* ruffle *in the commonwealth of Rome.*] A *ruffler* was a kind of cheating bully; and is so called in a statute made for the punishment of vagabonds in the 27th year of *K. Henry VIII.* See Greene's *Groundwork of Coney-catching*, 1592. Hence, I suppose, this sense of the verb, to *ruffle*. *Rufflers* are likewise enumerated among other vagabonds, by Holinshed, Vol. I. p. 113. STEEVENS.

383. *The Greeks, upon advice, did bury Ajax*
That slew himself; and wise Laertes' son
Did graciously plead for his funerals.] This passage alone would sufficiently convince me, that the play before us was the work of one who was conversant with the Greek tragedies in their original language. We have here a plain allusion to the *Ajax* of Sophocles, of which no translation was extant in the time of Shakspere. In that piece, Agamemnon consents at last to allow Ajax the rites of sepulture, and Ulysses is the pleader, whose arguments prevail in favour of his remains. STEEVENS.

394. *No man shed tears,* &c] This is evidently a translation of the distich of Ennius:

Nemo me lacrumeis decoret: nec funera fletu
Facsit. quur? volito vivu' per ora virûm.

STEEVENS.

ACT

ACT II.

Line 1. In the quarto, the direction is, *Manet Aaron*, and he is before made to enter with Tamora, though he says nothing. This scene ought to continue the first act. JOHNSON.

55. *Not I; till I have sheath'd*, &c.] This speech, which has been all along given to Demetrius, as the next to Chiron, were both given to the wrong speaker; for it was Demetrius that had thrown out the reproachful speeches on the other.

WARBURTON.

82. ——*a thousand deaths would I* propose,] Whether Chiron means he would *contrive* a thousand deaths for others, or *imagine* as many cruel ones for himself, I am unable to determine. STEEVENS.

86. *She is a woman, therefore may be woo'd;*

She is a woman, therefore may be won;] Suffolk, in the *First Part of King Henry VI.* makes use of almost the same words:

"She's beautiful, and therefore to be woo'd:
"She is a woman; therefore to be won."

REMARKS.

89. ——*more water glideth by the mill*, &c.] A Scottish proverb:

"Mickle water goes by the miller when he sleeps."

STEEVENS.

91. ——*to steal a* shive,—] A *shive* is a *slice*. So, in the Tale of *Argentile and Curan*, in Warner's *Albion's England*, 1602:

"A *sheeve* of bread as browne as nut."

Demetrius is again indebted to a Scots proverb:

"It is safe taking a *shive* of a cut loaf."

STEEVENS.

97. —*struck a doe*,] Mr. Holt is willing to infer from this passage that *Titus Andronicus* was not only the work of Shakspere, but one of his earliest performances, because the stratagems of his former profession seem to have been yet fresh in his mind. I had made the same observation in *K. Henry VI.* before I had seen his; but when we consider how many phrases are borrowed from the sports of the field, which were more followed in our author's time, than any other amusement; I do not think there is much in either his remark or my own.—Let me add, that we have here Demetrius, the son of a queen, demanding of his brother prince if he has not often been reduced to practise the common artifices of a deer-stealer:—an absurdity right worthy of the rest of the piece.

STEEVENS.

106. *To* square *for this?*——] To *square* is to *quarrel.* So, in the *Midsummer Night's Dream:*

——————they never meet,
But they do *square* ——————

Again, in Drant's translation of Horace's *Art of Poetry*, 1567:

"Let

"Let them not sing 'twixt act and act,
"What *squareth* from the rest."

But to *square*, which in the last instance signifies to *differ*, is now used only in the very opposite sense, and means to *agree*. STEEVENS

117. *A speedier course* than *lingering languishment*] The old copy reads:

——————this *lingering*, &c.

which may mean, *this coy languishing dame*, this *piece of reluctant softness*. STEEVENS.

123. ——*by kind*——] That is, by *nature*, which is the old signification of *kind*. JOHNSON.

130. —file *our engines with advice*,] *i. e.* remove all impediments from our designs by advice. The allusion is to the operation of the file, which, by conferring smoothness, facilitates the motion of the wheels which compose an engine or piece of machinery. STEEVENS.

142. *Per Styga*, &c.] These scraps of Latin are, I believe, taken, though not exactly, from some of Seneca's tragedies. STEEVENS.

143. The division of this play into acts, which was first made by the editors in 1623, is improper. There is here an interval of action, and here the second act ought to have begun. JOHNSON.

——*the morn is bright and grey*,] *i. e.* bright and yet not red, which was a sign of storms and rain, but *grey*, which foretold fair weather. Yet the Oxford editor alters *grey* to *gay*. WARBURTON.

Surely

Surely the Oxford editor is in the right; unless we reason like the Witches in *Macbeth*, and say,

"Fair is foul, and foul is fair."

The old reading is justified by the following passage in Shakspere's *Venus and Adonis*:

"Mine eyes are *bright and grey*, and quick in turning."

Again, by another example in *The Old Wives Tale*, 1595:

"The day is clear, the welkin, *bright and grey*."

STEEVENS.

178. ———*for their unrest,*] *Unrest*, for *disquiet*, is a word frequently used by the old writers. So, in *The Spanish Tragedy*, 1605:

"Thus therefore will I rest me, in *unrest*."

Thus in *Eliosto Libidinoso*, an ancient novel, by John Hinde, 1606:

"For the ease of whose *unrest*,
"Thus his furie was exprest."

Again, in *An excellent pastoral Dittie*, by Shep. Tonie; published in *England's Helicon*, 1614:

"With lute in hand did paint out her *unrest*."

STEEVENS.

179. *That have their alms*, &c.] This is obscure. It seems to mean only, that they who are to come at this gold of the empress are to suffer by it. JOHNSON.

180. *My lovely Aaron, wherefore look'st thou sad?*] In the course of the following notes several examples of the savage genius of Ravenscroft, who altered this play in the reign of K. Charles II. are set down for the

the entertainment of the reader. The following is a specimen of his descriptive talents. Instead of the line with which this speech of Tamora begins, she is made to say :

The emperor, with *wine* and *luxury o'ercome*,
Is fallen *asleep*—in's *pendent couch* he's laid
That *hangs* in yonder grotto *rock'd* by winds,
Which rais'd by art do give it gentle motion :
And troops of slaves stand round with fans per-
fum'd,
Made of the feathers pluck'd from Indian birds,
And cool him into golden slumbers—
This time I chose to come to thee, my Moor.
My lovely Aaron, wherefore, &c.———

An emperor who has had too large a dose of love and wine, and in consequence of satiety in both, falls asleep on a bed which partakes of the nature of a sailor's hammock and a child's cradle, is a curiosity which only Ravenscroft could have ventured to describe on the stage. I hope I may be excused for transplanting a few of his flowers into the barren desart of our comments on this tragedy. STEEVENS.

185. ——*a* chequer'd *shadow*——] Milton has the same expression :

" ——many a maid
" Dancing in the *chequer'd* shade."

STEEVENS.

200. ——*though* Venus *govern your desires*,
Saturn *is dominator over mine* :] The meaning of this passage may be illustrated by the astronomical description

description of *Saturn*, which *Venus* gives in Greene's *Planetomachia*, 1585. "The star of *Saturn* is especially *cooling*, and somewhat *drie*," &c.

Again, in the *Sea Voyage*, by Beaumont and Fletcher:

"———for your aspect
"You're much inclin'd to melancholy, and that
"Tells me the *sullen Saturn* had predominance
"At your nativity, a malignant planet!
"And if not qualified by a sweet conjunction
"Of a soft ruddy wench, born under Venus,
"It may prove fatal." COLLINS.

234. *Should* drive *upon thy new-transformed limbs.*] The author of the *Revisal* suspects that the poet wrote:

Should thrive *upon thy new transformed limbs*,

as the former is an expression that suggests no image to the fancy. But *drive*, I think, may stand, with this meaning: *the hounds should pass with impetuous haste*, &c. So, in Hamlet:

"*Pyrrhus at Priam* drives," &c.

i. e. flies with impetuosity at him. STEEVENS.

242. —*swarth Cimmerian*] *Swarth* is *black*. The Moor is called Cimmerian, from the affinity of blackness to darkness. JOHNSON.

256. —*noted long*:] He had yet been married but one night. JOHNSON.

266. *Here never shines the sun*, &c.] Mr. Rowe seems to have thought on this passage in his *Jane Shore*:

" This is the house where the sun never dawns,
" The bird of night sits screaming o'er its roof,
" Grim spectres sweep along the horrid gloom,
" And nought is heard but wailings and lament-
ings." STEEVENS.

274. *Should straight fall mad, or else die suddenly.*] This is said in fabulous physiology, of those that hear the groan of the mandrake torn up. JOHNSON.

The same thought and almost the same expressions occur in *Romeo and Juliet.* STEEVENS.

296. *And with that* painted hope *she braves your mightiness,*] So, in that exquisite stanza which opens *Love in a Village:*

" *Hope,* thou nurse of young desire,
" Fairy promiser of joy,
" *Painted* vapour, glow-worm fire,
" Temperate sweet, that ne'er canst cloy."
HENLEY.

397. *A precious ring,*———] There is supposed to be a gem called a carbuncle, which emits not reflected but native light. Mr. Boyle believes the reality of its existence. JOHNSON.

So, in the *Gesta Romanorum,* history the sixth: " He farther beheld and saw a *carbuncle* in the hall that lighted all the house."

Again, in Lydgate's *Description of King Priam's Palace,* l. 2.

" And for most chefe all dirkeness to confound,
" A *carbuncle* was set as kyng of stones all,
" To recomforte and gladden all the hall.

" And it to enlumine in the black night
" With the freshness of his ruddy light."

Again, in the *Muse's Elysium*, by Drayton:

" Is that admired, mighty stone,
" The *carbuncle* that's named;
" Which from it such a flaming light
" And radiancy ejecteth,
" That in the very darkest night
" The eye to it directeth."

Chaucer, in the *Romaunt of the Rose*, attributes the same properties to the *carbuncle*:

" Soche light ysprang out of the stone."

STEEVENS.

489. *If I do dream, 'would all my wealth would make me!*] If this be a dream, I would give all my possessions to be delivered from it by waking.

JOHNSON.

ACT III.

Line 17. —*TWO ancient urns,*] Oxford editor.—Vulg. *two ancient ruins.* JOHNSON.

67. ———*in thy father's* sight?] We should read *spight.* WARBURTON.

72. ——I'll *chop off my hands too*;] Perhaps we should read:

———or *chop off*, &c.

It

It is not easy to discover how Titus, when he had chopp'd off one of his hands, would have been able to have chopp'd off the other. STEEVENS.

91. *It was my* deer;——] The play upon *deer* and *dear* has been used by Waller, who calls a lady's girdle,

"The pale that held my lovely *deer*."

JOHNSON.

169. *Writing destruction on the enemies'* castle?] Thus all the editions. But Mr. Theobald, after ridiculing the sagacity of the former editors at the expence of a great deal of awkward mirth, corrects it to *casque*; and this, he says, he'll stand by: And the Oxford editor, taking his security, will stand by it too. But what a slippery ground is critical confidence! Nothing could bid fairer for a right conjecture; yet'tis all imaginary. A close helmet, which covered the whole head, was called a *castle*, and, I suppose, for that very reason. Don Quixote's barber, at least as good a critick as these editors, says (in Shelton's translation, 1612), "I know what is a helmet, and what a morrion, and what a close *castle*, and other things touching warfare." Lib. iv. cap. 18. And the original, *celada de encaxe*, has something of the same signification. Shakspere uses the word again in *Troilus and Cressida*;

"——————and Diomede
"Stand fast, and wear a *castle* on thy head."

WARBURTON.

"Dr. Warburton's proof (says the author of the *Revisal*) rests wholly on two mistakes, one of a printer,

the other of his own. In Shelton's *Don Quixote* the word *close castle* is an error of the press for a *close casque*, which is the exact interpretation of the Spanish original, *celada de encaxe*; this Dr. Warburton must have seen, if he had understood Spanish as well as he pretends to do. For the primitive *caxa*, from whence the word, *encaxe*, is derived, signifies a *box*, or *coffer*; but never a *castle*. His other proof is taken from this passage in *Troilus and Cressida*:

" ———————and Diomede

" Stand fast, and wear a *castle* on thy *head*."

Wherein Troilus doth not advise Diomede to wear a helmet on his head, for that would be poor indeed, as he always wore one in battle; but to guard his head with the most impenetrable armour, to shut it up even in a *castle*, if it were possible, or else his sword should reach it.

After all this reasoning, however, it appears, that a *castle* did actually signify a *close helmet*. So, in Holinshed, Vol. II. p. 815: "——Then suddenlie with great noise of trumpets entered Sir Thomas Knevet in a *castell* of cole blacke, and over the *castell* was written, The dolorous *castell*, and so he and the earle of Essex, &c. ran their courses with the king," &c. STEEVENS.

282. *Lavinia, thou shalt be employed in these* things;] Thus the folio, 1623. The quarto 1611 thus:

And Lavinia thou shalt be employ'd in these *arms*. STEEVENS.

302. This scene, which does not contribute any thing to the action, yet seems to have the same author with the rest, is omitted in the quarto of 1611, but found in the folio of 1623. JOHNSON.

307. *And cannot* passionate, *&c.*] This obsolete verb is likewise found in Spenser:

"Great pleasure mix'd with pitiful regard,
"That godly king and queen did *passionate.*"

STEEVENS.

339. ——mesh'd *upon her cheeks:*] A very coarse allusion to brewing. STEEVENS.

346. ——*by still practice*——] By *constant* or *continual* practice. JOHNSON.

361. ——*a father and* mother?] *Mother* perhaps should be omitted, as the following lines speak only in the singular number, and Titus most probably confines his thoughts to the sufferings of a father.

STEEVENS.

363. *And buz* lamenting doings *in the air?*] *Sad doings* for any unfortunate event, is a common though not an elegant expression. STEEVENS.

ACT IV.

Line 14. ——*Tully's* oratory.] Thus the moderns. The old copies read—Tully's *oratour*; meaning perhaps, Tully *De oratore.* STEEVENS.

51. ———*how she* quotes *the leaves.*] To *quote* is to observe. See a note on *Hamlet,* act ii. sc. 2.

STEEVENS.

82. *Magne Regnator Deum,* &c. is the exclamation of *Hippolitus,* when *Phædra* discovers the secret of her incestuous passion in *Seneca*'s tragedy.

STEEVENS.

90. *And swear with me,—as with the woeful* feere,] *Feere* signifies a *companion,* and here metaphorically a *husband.* The proceeding of Brutus, which is alluded to, is described at length in our author's *Rape of Lucrece,* as putting an end to the lamentations of Collatinus and Lucretius, the husband and father of Lucretia. So, in *Sir Eglamour of Artoys,* sig. A 4.

" Christabell, your daughter free
" When shall she have a *fere?*" i. e. a husband.

TYRWHITT.

130. *Revenge* the *heavens*——] It should be:

Revenge, ye *heavens!*———

Ye was by the transcriber taken for *y^e^,* the.

JOHNSON.

I believe

I believe the old reading is right, and signifies—*may the heavens revenge*, &c. STEEVENS.

I believe we should read

Revenge then *heavens*. TYRWHITT.

137. *Gramercy*,———] i. e. *grand merci*; *great thanks*. STEEVENS.

219. *I'll* broach *the tadpole*——] A *broach* is a *spit*. I'll *spit* the tadpole. JOHNSON.

So, in Heywood's *Rape of Lucrece*, 1630:

"I'll *broach* thee on my steel."

Again, in Greene's *Pleasant Discovery of the Cosenage of Colliers*, 1592: "—with that she caught a *spit* in her hand, and swore if he offered to stirre she should therewith *broach* him." COLLINS.

253. ———*another* leer:] *Leer* is complexion, or hue. STEEVENS.

278. *Two may keep counsel, when the third's away*:] This proverb is introduced likewise in *Romeo and Juliet*. STEEVENS.

289. *Go pack with him*,——] *Pack* here seems to have the meaning of *make a bargain*. Or it may mean, as in the phrase of modern gamesters, to act collusively.

And mighty dukes pack knaves for half a crown.

POPE.

To *pack* is to contrive insidiously. So, in *King Lear*:

"———snuffs and *packings* of the dukes."

STEEVENS.

To PACK *a jury*, is an expression still used; though the practice, I trust, is itself obselete. HENLEY.

362. *Yet wrung with wrongs,*——] To *wring* a horse is to press or strain his back. JOHNSON.

370. *To Saturn, and to* Cœlus;——] The quarto and folio read:——to *Caius*. Mr. Rowe first substituted *Cœlus* in its room. STEEVENS.

375. ——*shoot all your shafts into the court:*] In the ancient ballad of *Titus Andronicus's Complaint*, is the following passage:

"Then past reliefe I upp and downe did goe,
"And with my tears wrote in the dust my woe:
"*I shot my arrowes towards heaven hie,*
"And for revenge to hell did often crye."

On this Dr. Percy has the following observation: "If the ballad was written before the play, I should suppose this to be only a metaphorical expression, taken from the Psalms: "*They shoot out their arrows, even bitter words*, Ps. lxiv. 3." *Reliques of ancient English Poetry*, Vol. I. p. 228. third edit. STEEVENS.

379. —*I* am *a mile beyond the moon*;] The folio 1623 and 1632, read:

——————*I* aym *a mile beyond the moon.*

To "cast beyond the moon," is an expression used in Hinde's *Eliosto Libidinoso*, 1606. Again, in *Mother Bombie*, 1594: "Risio hath gone beyond himself in *casting beyond* the moon."

Again, in *A Woman kill'd with kindness*, 1617:

"——————I talk of things impossible,
"And *cast beyond the moon.*" STEEVENS.

405. ——*the tribunal plebs,*——] I suppose the Clown means to say, *Plebeian tribune*, i. e. tribune of the

the people; for none could fill this office but such as were descended from *Plebeian* ancestors. STEEVENS.

445. ——*his* wreaks,] *i. e.* his *revenges*. STEEVENS.

524. ——honey-stalks *to sheep*;] *Honey-stalks* are clover-flowers, which contain a sweet juice. It is common for cattle to over-charge themselves with clover and die. JOHNSON.

545. —*successfully*—] The old copies read:—*successantly*. STEEVENS.

ACT V.

Line 21. *To gaze upon a ruinous monastery*;] Shakspere has so perpetually offended against chronology in all his plays, that no very conclusive argument can be deduced from the particular absurdity of these anachronisms, relative to the authenticity of *Titus Andronicus*. And yet the *ruined monastery*, the *Popish tricks*, &c. that Aaron talks of, and especially the French salutation from the mouth of Titus, are altogether so very much out of place, that I cannot persuade myself even our hasty poet could have been guilty of their insertion, or would have permitted them to remain, had he corrected the performance for another. STEEVENS.

80. —*his* bauble—] See a note on *All's Well that ends Well*, act iv. STEEVENS.

100. *That* codding *spirit*——] *i. e.* that love of *bed-sports*. *Cod* is a word still used in Yorkshire for a *pillow*. See Lloyd's catalogue of local words at the ends of Ray's *Proverbs*. COLLINS.

103. *As true a dog as ever fought at head.*—] An allusion to bull-dogs, whose generosity and courage are always shown by meeting the bull in front, and seizing his nose. JOHNSON.

So in a collection of Epigrams by J. D. and C. M. printed at Middleburgh, no date :

" ——amongst the dogs and beares he goes;
" Where, while he skipping cries—*To head, to head*," &c. STEEVENS.

146. *Bring down the devil*;—] It appears, from these words, that the audience were entertained with part of the apparatus of an execution, and that Aaron was mounted on a ladder, as ready to be turned off. STEEVENS.

225. *So thou destroy* Rapine *and Murder there.*] I do not know of any instance that can be brought to prove that *rape* and *rapine* were ever used as synonymous terms. The word *rapine* has always been employed for a *less fatal kind of plunder*, and means the violent act of deprivation of any good, the honour here alluded to being always excepted. I have indeed since discovered that Gower, *De Confessione Amantis*, lib. v. fol. 116, b. uses *ravine* in the same sense :

" For

" For if thou be of suche covine,
" To get of love by *ravyne*
" Thy lust," &c. STEEVENS.

355. *And of the paste a* coffin——] A *coffin* is the term of art for the cavity of a raised pye. JOHNSON.

391. —break *the parle*;] That is, *begin* the parley. We yet say, he *breaks* his mind.
JOHNSON.

434. *Eating the flesh that she herself hath bred.*] The additions made by Ravenscroft to this scene, are so much of a piece with it, that I cannot resist the temptation of shewing the reader how he continues the speech before us :

" Thus cramm'd, thou'rt bravely fatten'd up
for hell,
" And thus to Pluto I do serve thee up :"
[*Stabs the empress.*

And then—" *A curtain drawn discovers the heads and hands of Demetrius and Chiron hanging up agasint the wall; their bodies in chairs in bloody linen.*"
STEEVENS.

445. *Goth.*] This speech and the next, in the quarto 1611, are given to a *Roman lord*. In the folio they both belong to the Goth. I know not why they are separated. I believe the whole belongs to *Marcus*; who, when Lucius has gone through such a part of the narrative as concerns his own exile, claims his turn to speak again, and recommend Lucius to the empire. STEEVENS.

519. *Thanks, gentle Romans;*—] It should seem from the beginning of this speech of Lucius, that the first and last lines of the preceding one ought to be given to the concourse of Romans who are supposed to be present. STEEVENS.

THE END.

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London 1787

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